NOT TO BE ISSUED
OUT OF THE LIBRARY.

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 21 October, 2015

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

ROMAN EMPERORS,

FROM

AUGUSTUS TO CONSTANTINE.

BY JOHN BAPTIST LEWIS CREVIER,

PROFESSOR OF RHETORIC, IN THE COLLEGE OF BEAUVAIS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY JOHN MILL, ESQ.

37157
ac

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOL. VII.

v.vi.8

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY F. C. & J. RIVINGTON; T. EGERTON; SCATCHERD & LETTERMAN; J. CUTHELL; J. NUNN; W. CLARKE & SONS; LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME & CO.; J. CARPENTER & SON; LAW & CO.; E. JEFFERY; WACKINGTON & CO.; T. LLOYD; B. CROSBY & CO.; J. OTRIDGE; J. RICHARDSON; BLACK, PARRY & CO.; W. BAYNES; J. BOOTH; J. MAWMAN; R. BALDWIN; J. BOOKER; E. GREENLAND; NORNEVILLE & FELL; GALE & CO.; G. & S. ROBINSON; R. SAUNDERS; OGLES & CO.; WALKER & CO.

1814.

Gsd
937
Sec/H
37157

00037157

List of the Consuls and Years included in this Volume.

NERVA, Emperor.

C. Fulvius Valens,	A. R. 847.
C. Antistius Vetus,	A. C. 96.
Nerva Augustus III.	A. R. 848.
L. Virginius Rufus III.	A. C. 97.
Nerva Augustus IV.	A. R. 849.
Trajanus Cæsar II.	A. C. 98.

TRAJAN, Emperor.

Nerva Augustus IV.	A. R. 849.
Trajanus Cæsar II.	A. C. 98.
A. Cornelius Palma,	A. R. 850.
C. Sosius Senecio,	A. C. 99.
Trajanus Augustus III.	A. R. 851.
M. Julius Fronto III.	A. C. 100.
Trajanus Augustus IV.	A. R. 852.
Sex. Articuleius Pætus,	A. C. 101.
——— Suranus,	A. R. 853.
L. Licinius Sura,	A. C. 102.
Trajanus Augustus V.	A. R. 854.
L. Maximus,	A. C. 103.
L. Licinius Sura II.	A. R. 855.
——— Marcellus,	A. C. 104.
Ti. Julius Candidus II.	A. R. 856.
A. Julius Quadratus II.	A. C. 105.
——— Commodus,	A. R. 857.
——— Cerealis,	A. C. 106.
L. Licinius Sura III.	A. R. 858.
C. Sosius Senecio II.	A. C. 107.

Ap. Annius Trebonianus Gallus,	A. R. 859.
M. Atilius Metellus Bradua,	A. C. 108.
A. Cornelius Palma II.	A. R. 860.
——— Tullus,	A. C. 109.
Priscinus, or Crispinus,	A. R. 861.
——— Orfitus,	A. C. 110.
C. Calpurnius Piso,	A. R. 862.
M. Vettius Bolanus,	A. C. 111.
Trajanus Augustus VI.	A. R. 863.
T. Sextius Africanus,	A. C. 112.
L. Publilius Celsus II.	A. R. 864.
C. Clodius Crispinus,	A. C. 113.
Q. Ninnius Hasta,	A. R. 865.
P. Manilius Vopiscus,	A. C. 114.
L. Vipstanus Messalla,	A. R. 866.
M. Vergilianus Pedo,	A. C. 115.
L. Ælius Lamia,	A. R. 867.
Ælianus Veter,	A. C. 116.
——— Quintius Niger,	A. R. 868.
C. Vipstanus Apronianus,	A. C. 117.

ADRIAN, Emperor.

——— Quintus Niger,	A. R. 168.
C. Vipstanus Apronianus,	A. C. 117.
Imp. Adrianus Augustus II.	A. R. 869.
——— Fuscus Salinator,	A. C. 118.
Imp. Adrianus Augustus III.	A. R. 870.
——— Rusticus,	A. C. 119.
L. Catilius Severus II.	A. R. 871.
T. Aurelius Fulvius,	A. C. 120.
M. Annius Verus II.	A. R. 872.
——— Augur,	A. C. 121.
——— Acilius Aviola,	A. R. 873.
——— Corellius Pansa,	A. C. 122.
Q. Arrius Pætinus,	A. R. 874.
C. Ventidius Apronianus,	A. C. 123.
P. Cornelius Scipio,	A. R. 875.
— Asiaticus II.	A. C. 124.

P. Vettius Aquilinus,	
M. Annius Verus III.	A. R. 877.
L. Varius Ambibulus,	A. C. 126.
Titianus, or perhaps Tatianus,	A. R. 878.
——— Gallicanus,	A. C. 127.
Torquatus Asprenas,	A. R. 879.
——— Annius Libo,	A. C. 128.
P. Juvencius Celsus II.	A. R. 880.
Q. Julius Balbus,	A. C. 129.
Ser. Octavius Lænas,	A. R. 882.
Pontianus,	A. C. 131.
M. Antonius Rufinus,	
——— Iliberus,	A. R. 884.
——— Sisenna,	A. C. 133.
C. Julius Servianus III.	A. R. 885.
C. Vibius Varus,	A. C. 134.
——— Pontianus,	A. R. 886.
——— Atilianus,	A. C. 135.
L. Ceionius Commodus,	A. R. 887.
S. Vetullenus Civ. Pompeianus,	A. C. 136.
L. Ælius Verus Cæsar II.	A. R. 888.
P. Coelius Balbinus,	A. C. 137.
——— Camerinus,	A. R. 889.
——— Niger,	A. C. 138.

TITUS ANTONINUS, Emperor.

——— Camerinus,	A. R. 889.
——— Niger,	A. C. 138.
T. Antoninus Augustus II.	A. R. 890.
C. Bruttius Præsens II.	A. C. 139.
T. Antoninus Augustus III.	A. R. 891.
M. Aurelius Cæsar,	A. C. 140.
M. Peducæus Syloga Priscinus,	A. R. 892.
T. Hoenius Severus,	A. C. 141.
L. Cuspius Rufinus,	A. R. 893.
L. Statius Quadratus,	A. C. 142.
C. Bellicius Torquatus,	A. R. 894.
Ti. Claudius Herodes Atticus,	A. C. 143.

Ti. Claudius Avitus,	A. R. 895.
——— Maximus,	A. C. 144.
T. Antoninus Augustus IV.	A. R. 896.
M. Aurelius Cæsar II.	A. C. 145.
Sex. Erucius Clarus II.	A. R. 897.
Cn. Claudius Severus,	A. C. 146.
——— Largus,	A. R. 898.
——— Messalinus,	A. C. 147.
——— Torquatus,	A. R. 899.
——— Julianus,	A. C. 148.
Ser. Scipio Orfitus,	A. R. 900.
Q. Nonius Priscus,	A. C. 149.
——— Glabrio Gallicanus,	A. R. 901.
——— Vetus,	A. C. 150.
——— Quintilius Condianus,	A. R. 902.
——— Quintilius Maximus,	A. C. 151.
Sex. Junius Glabrio,	A. R. 903.
C. Omullus Verianus,	A. C. 152.
C. Bruttius Præsens,	A. R. 904.
A. Junius Rufinus,	A. C. 153.
L. Aurelius Commodus,	A. R. 905.
T. Sextius Lateranus,	A. C. 154.
C. Julius Severus,	A. R. 906.
M. Rufinus Sabinianus,	A. C. 155.
M. Ceionus Silvanus,	A. R. 907.
C. Serius Augurinus,	A. C. 156.
——— Barbarus,	A. R. 908.
——— Regulus,	A. C. 157.
——— Tertullus,	A. R. 909.
——— Sacerdos,	A. C. 158.
——— Plautius Quintillus,	A. R. 910.
M. Statius Priscus,	A. C. 159.
Appius Annius Bradua,	A. R. 911.
T. Vibius Barus,	A. C. 160.
M. Aurelius Cæsar III.	A. R. 912.
L. Aurelius Commodus II.	A. C. 161.

MARCUS AURELIUS, Emperor.

M. Aurelius Cæsar III.	A. R. 912.
L. Aurelius Commodus II.	A. C. 161.
Q. Junius Rusticus,	A. R. 913.
C. Vettius Aquilinus,	A. C. 162.
——— Lelianus,	A. R. 914.
——— Pastor,	A. C. 163.
M. Nonius Macrinus,	A. R. 915.
——— Celsus,	A. C. 164.
M. Gavius Orfitus,	A. R. 916.
L. Arrius Pudens,	A. C. 165.
——— Servilius Pudens,	A. R. 917.
L. Fufidius Pollio,	A. C. 166.
L. Aurelius Verus Augustus III.	A. R. 918.
——— Quadratus,	A. C. 167.
——— Apronianus II.	A. R. 919.
——— Paulus II.	A. C. 168.
M. Cornelius Cethegus,	A. R. 921.
C. Erucius Clarus,	A. C. 170.
L. Septimus Severus,	A. R. 922.
L. Alfidius Herennianus,	A. C. 171.
——— Maximus,	A. R. 923.
——— Orfitus,	A. C. 172.
M. Aurelius Severus II.	A. R. 924.
T. Claudius Pompeianus,	A. C. 173.
——— Gallus,	A. R. 925.
——— Flaccus,	A. C. 174.
——— Piso,	A. R. 926.
——— Julianus,	A. C. 175.
T. Vitrasius Pollio II.	A. R. 927.
M. Flavius Aper II.	A. C. 176.
L. Aurelius Commodus Cæsar,	A. R. 928.
——— Quintillus,	A. C. 177.
——— Gavius Orfitus,	A. R. 929.
——— Julianus Rufus,	A. C. 178.
Commodus Augustus II.	A. R. 930.
T. Annius Aurelius Verus II.	A. C. 179.

combats suppressed at Vienne, 45. *Trajan protects the arts and sciences. His moderation with respect to the possessions of private men*, 46. *He sells, or gives away, several of the imperial palaces. Instead of building for himself, he reserves his magnificence for public structures*, 47. *Plain and strong demonstrations of the public regard and veneration for Trajan. He prefers them to all extraordinary honours*, 48. *The surname of* BEST *given him Acclamations of the senate and people full of tenderness and affection, and well deserved by a thousand instances of wisdom and goodness*, 51. *The affair of Marius Priscus*, 57. *The affair of Classicus. Pliny's consulship and panegyric*, 58. *Largius Macædo, an ancient pretor, murdered by his slaves*, 59. *Beginning of Adrian's elevation, by his marriage with Sabina, the daughter of Trajan's nephew*, 60. *Trajan's fourth consulship*, 61. *Adrian appointed questor to the emperor. War with the Dacians*, 62. *Their king sues for peace and obtains it, but on very hard terms*, 63. *Trajan's triumph. Combats of gladiators. The pantomimes reinstated*, 64. *Two years of peace. Trajan applies himself to the cares of government. The death of Frontinus. His character and works*, 65. *Pliny succeeds him in the dignity of augur*, 66. *The custom of choosing magistrates by ballot, introduced by the senate*, 67. *Bribery checked. Candidates for offices obliged to have landed estates in Italy. Revival of the ancient ordinances by which advocates were forbidden to receive any thing from their clients*, 69. *Sundry affairs judged by Trajan with great equity and penetration*, 71. *Trajan's modesty, and engaging affability at table*, 73. *The port of Centum Cellæ. Port of Ancona. Pliny sets out for his government of Pontus and Bithynia*, 74. *Pliny's letter to Trajan concerning the Christians*, 75. *Trajan's answer*, 78. *Persecution of the church under Trajan. Pliny's death. His character, taken from his own letters, by M. Rollin*, 79. *Remarkable instance of Pliny's probity*, 80. *Friendship between Pliny and Tacitus. Tacitus seems to have outlived Pliny. The order of his works*, 83. *His birth and life, so far as we know of them*, 84. *Death of Silius Italicus. A short sketch of his life*, 85. *Death of Martial. Juvenal wrote most of his satires in Trajan's reign*, 86. *Death of the informer Regulus. Instances of his audaciousness and villany*, 87. *A child of thirteen years of age wins the prize for poetry*, 91.

SECT. III. *Trajan's second war against the Dacians. Causes of the rupture*, 92. *Decebalus, alarmed at Trajan's preparatives,*

preparatives, sues for peace. He endeavours to get Trajan assassinated, 93. *An officer of distinction, traiterously seized by him, poisons himself*, 94. *Trajan builds a bridge over the Danube*, 95. *Decebalus, conquered, and in danger of being taken, kills himself*, 96. *His hidden treasures discovered. Colonies established by Trajan in Dacia and the neighbouring provinces. Trajan's second triumph*, 98. *Arabia Petræa subdued by Palma. Trajan's occupations during his abode in Rome. Crassus conspires against him, and is only banished for it*, 99. *Trajan makes war against the Parthians, and goes into the East*, 100. *Armenia conquered by Trajan, and made a Roman province*, 102. *Conquest of Mesopotamia*, 104. *Arabia Petræa subdued, and made a Roman province. Trajan maintains a proper discipline among his troops, as much by his own example as by his orders. Lusius Quietus, by birth a Mauritanian, one of Trajan's best generals*, 105. *Barbarous nations to the north of Armenia subdued by Trajan. Trajan's return to Rome, which he leaves again towards the year 865, to renew the war against the Parthians*, 106. *Violent earthquake at Antioch*, 107. *Trajan consults the oracle of Heliopolis, and receives an enigmatical answer*, 108. *Trajan throws a bridge of boats over the Tigris. The Roman method of building a bridge of boats*, 109. *Trajan conquers Assyria. He returns towards Babylon*, 110. *Trajan takes the cities of Ctesiphon and Susa*, 111. *Prosperity seems to have turned his brain. He falls down the Tigris, crosses the Persian gulph, and enters the ocean. He takes a sea-port on the south coast of Arabia Felix*, 112. *He envies Alexander his great renown. He visits the ruins of Babylon*, 113. *The countries lately conquered rebel. Trajan subdues them again. He gives the Parthians a king*, 114. *Trajan undertakes the siege of Atra, but is forced to raise it*, 115. *Rebellions and disasters of the Jews in Cyrene, Egypt, Cyprus, and Mesopotamia*, 116. *Trajan falls sick. Loss of his conquests in the East*, 118. *Adrian's schemes and intrigues to make Trajan adopt him*, 119. *Trajan had quite different views, and thought not of adopting Adrian*, 121. *Trajan dies, and Adrian succeeds him by virtue of a forged adoption*, 122. *Honours done to Trajan's memory. Duration of his life and reign. His virtues and his vices*, 123.

BOOK XIX.

SECT. I. *Adrian proclaimed emperor in Syria, writes to the senate to desire a confirmation of what had been done by the*

the army, 137. *The senate grants it*, 138. *Adrian remains some time in the East. He abandons all Trajan's conquests in the East*, 139. *Adrian's jealousy of Trajan's glory*, 140. *He preserves peace all his reign, purchasing it of the barbarians. The Jews reduced to an entire submission by Martius Turbo*, 142. *Adrian returns to Rome, and secures the tranquillity of Dacia, by making peace with the Sarmatæ and Roxolani*, 143. *Dangers from domestic enemies. Adrian uses clemency at first*, 144. *A conspiracy. Four consular persons put to death. Adrian denies his having any hand in these executions*, 145. *He endeavours to efface the odious impression by his bounties to the people*, 146. *A mixture of virtues and vices in Adrian. A popular maxim of Adrian concerning the nature of power*, 148. *His taste for simplicity*, 149. *He lives familiarly with his friends*, 150. *His conduct towards the people mixed with complaisance and steadiness. He is extremely popular to the cities in alliance or in subjection to the empire. He is affable and liberal to individuals. His attention to ease the public calamities*, 151. *Acts of clemency. Multitude and magnificence of Adrian's works over all the empire*, 154. *Care of justice. He frequently administers it himself*, 157. *His attention to the conduct of the governors of the provinces. Four consular persons established with the power of jurisdiction over Italy*, 158. *Perpetual edict. Laws upon different subjects*, 159. *Adrian gives no credit to freedmen. He preserves military discipline by his diligence and example. He is much beloved by the soldiery*, 162. *He makes several regulations in regard to the Roman militia. Adrian not so valuable a man as a prince*, 165. *He piques himself upon his application to all the arts and sciences, even astrology and magic*, 166. *He is skilled in the Roman and Greek religion, and despises all others. He was moderate as to the Christian religion*, 167. *Adrian's indiscreet curiosity as to the common affairs of life. He loves the conversation of the learned, and their merit raises his jealousy*, 168. *Examples of Dionysius of Miletum and Favorinus*, 169. *He banishes, and afterwards puts to death, Apollodorus the architect*, 171. *He is always violent in his friendship and hatred. He envies even the glory of the dead*, 172. *He persecutes all his friends. Tatian proscribed*, 173. *Martius Turbo disgraced. Similis retires*, 175. *Adrian's wicked proceedings against his wife. Disgrace of Septicius Clarus and Suetonius*, 176. *Enormous debauches of Adrian. Antinous*, 177. *Adrian's extravagant passion*

passion for dogs and hunting-horses. The notion that may be formed of Adrian's character, 178.

SECT. II. *Adrian's voyages. He does not visit his own country*, 179. *He comes into Gaul and Germany. In Great Britain he builds a wall, to stop the incursions of the barbarians*, 189. *Troubles in Egypt about Apis. Adrian at Terragona. He quells some warlike commotions in Mauritania. A short description of the rest of his voyages*, 181. *Adrian's letter concerning Egypt*, 183. *The Athenians loaded with favours*, 184. *His severity against governors who abused their power. His pacific conduct with foreign kings and nations*, 185. *Revolt of the Jews*, 186. *Barchochebas. The rebels are overcome, and extirpated in three years*, 188. *The Jews forbidden ever to enter into Jerusalem, but upon the anniversary-day of the taking of their city*, 190. *A new city built upon the ruins of Jerusalem, with the name of Ælia Capitolina*, 191. *The great merit of Julius Severus, the conqueror of the Jews*, 192.

SECT. III. *Adrian's sickness*, 193. *He adopts Verus. The birth and character of Verus*, 194. *Adrian puts to death Servian, and Fuscus, grandson of Servian, and many others. The death of the empress Sabina. Verus is made prætor, and twice consul*, 196. *He languishes some time, and dies*, 197. *Adrian adopts in his room Titus Antoninus. History of Antoninus, till his adoption*, 198. *Adrian, tormented with a long sickness, wants to despatch himself. Antoninus puts it out of his power*, 210. *He saves many senators, whom Adrian would have put to death. Adrian's death*, 212. *With great difficulty Antoninus obtains of the senate that Adrian should be ranked with the gods*, 213. *A judgment of Adrian. The state of learning in his reign*, 215.

SECT. IV. *Antoninus's reign, in all respects, worthy of being remembered, wants historians. Honours decreed to Antoninus, and to all who belong to him*, 224. *He begins with acts of clemency to the conspirators*, 223. *Beginnings of a rebellion, and war appeased without trouble*, 226. *The indifference of the Roman emperors for conquests. The reign of Antoninus was pacific. He studies to make his people happy*, 227. *He takes advice; but does not suffer himself to be governed. He is fond of giving a reason for his conduct. His affable and popular manners*, 228. *Acts of kindness, which even injuries do not prevent*, 229. *When he must use severity, he always softened it with mildness*, 230. *His compassion, a great assistance in public calamities. He fears to oppress the people. Antoninus's goodness does not degenerate into weakness*, 231. *He manages the finances of the state, and is liberal*

ral of his own fortune, 232. An economist without avarice, he understands where to bestow his liberalities, 233. Games and spectacles. Edifices with which he embellishes Rome, and many other cities. Equality and steadiness of his conduct, 234. Antoninus's ordinances upon several points of jurisprudence, 235. Rescripts in favour of Christians, 236. He is respected by all the neighbouring kings and nations to the empire, 237. His private conduct was as praiseworthy as his maxims of government. Some imperfection, however, to be observed, 238. Antoninus makes Marcus Aurelius his son-in-law, and gives him the name of Cæsar, 239. Marcus Aurelius continues his exercises and studies of philosophy, 240. The awry pedantry of Apollonius the Stoic. The good heart of Marcus Aurelius. He is associated into the tribunitial power. Secular games, 241. He governs with Antoninus, 242. Sickness and death of Antoninus, 243. Honours paid to his memory, 244. Veneration for the name of Antoninus. A picture of Antoninus, drawn by Marcus Aurelius, 245. Antoninus loves and cultivates letters. Men famous for their genius, and their works in his reign. Fronto, an orator. Appian. Ptolomy. Maximus of Tyre. Herodes Atticus, 249.

BOOK XX.

SECT. I. *Marcus Aurelius acknowledged emperor, associates his adoptive brother into the empire, and makes him take the name of Verus, 259. Judgment of this act of Marcus Aurelius. Largesses to the soldiers and people, 260. Funeral of Antoninus, 261. Happy and peaceable beginnings. Birth of Commodus. Inundation of the Tyber. Sundry warlike commotions. War with the Parthians, 262. Verus goes into the East, 264. Events of war, 265. Verus has no part in the war. Entirely taken up with pleasure, 266. He is adorned with three pompous titles, which he communicates to Marcus Aurelius. Completion of the projected marriage between Verus and Lucilla, daughter of Marcus Aurelius, 268. After the conclusion of the war, Verus returns to Rome. He triumphs with Marcus Aurelius. A terrible plague which wastes the empire, 269. The vices of Verus increased during his stay in Syria; they carry him into excesses, 270. Picture of Marcus Aurelius's conduct. His evenness of mind. His deference for the senate, 273. His attention to the happiness of the people, 275. His condescension to the taste of the people in respect of shows and sports, 277. Goodness the fundamental character of*

of Marcus Aurelius, 278. *He erred in this through excess. In consequence of this, he is suspected of affectation in his virtue*, 280. *He punishes informers. He causes justice to be administered, and does it himself with a scrupulous exactness*, 281. *Divers rules of Marcus Aurelius*, 282. *History of the life and death of Peregrinus*, 286.

SECT. II. *A general idea of the war with the Marcomanni. Three periods in this war*, 294. *It was preceded by that with the Catti. Beginning of the Marcomanni war. Preparations of Aurelius*, 295. *The two emperors set out together for the war*, 296. *Account of what they did. Death of Lucius Verus*, 297. *Suspicions in regard to it against Aurelius refuted*, 298. *Apotheosis of L. Verus. Want of openness in M. Aurelius's behaviour*, 299. *He uses it very properly to the sisters and aunts of Verus. He marries his daughter again to Pompeianus. A great victory over the Marcomanni*, 300. *Aurelius returns into Pannonia, and pushes the war with vigour for five years. Battle against the Jazyges upon the frozen Danube*, 301. *Victory over the Quadi owing to the assistance of Heaven, obtained by the prayers of Christians*, 302. *Aurelius's clemency to Ariogeses, king of the Quadi*, 305. *He grants peace to the nations he had conquered. Above a hundred thousand prisoners restored to the Romans. Colonies of barbarians received into the dominions of the empire*, 306. *Officers who distinguished themselves in that war. Rufus Basseus, Pompeianus, Pertinax*, 307. *The illustrious dead honoured with statues. Aurelius is prevented from pushing the war against the barbarians by the revolt of Avidius Cassius. Character of this rebel*, 308. *He causes himself to be proclaimed emperor*, 315. *Aurelius hears, in Pannonia, of the revolt of Cassius*, 318. *Cassius is slain, at the end of three months, by two officers of the army*, 321. *Aurelius's clemency to the family and accomplices of Cassius*, 325. *No Christian took part in the revolt of Cassius*, 326.

SECT. III. *Aurelius visits the Eastern provinces*, 327. *Cassius's papers burnt, without being read. Aurelius pardons the cities and nations who had followed Cassius's party. He maintains peace with the kings of the East. Death of Faustina*, 328. *Irregularities in her conduct. Aurelius's excessive patience in this respect. He causes divine honours to be paid her after her death*, 329. *He takes a concubine*, 330. *He visits Alexandria and Athens. He returns to Italy*, 331. *An account of his too great indulgence to his son Commodus. Bad character of this young prince*, 332. *Triumph of Aurelius. Largesses*, 334. *He passes almost two years at Rome. Re-*

pairs

newal of the war with the Marcomanni, 335. *Commodus's marriage. Singular petition of the philosophers to Aurelius*, 336. *He departs to the war, and obtains great advantages. He dies in Pannonia*, 337. *Aurelius's family. The whole empire bewail his death*, 340. *They confer upon him all kinds of honours, human and divine*, 341. *Public scourges, against which his goodness was a remedy. He persecuted the Christians*, 342. *Famous philosophers in his reign*, 343. *Aurelius himself. Crescent and Celsus. Sextus Empiricus. Demonax. Apuleius. Lucian, enemy of philosophers. Other writers of different kinds*, 345. *Galen. Pausanias. Aulus Gellius. Polyenus. Hermogenes. History of the false soothsayer Alexander*, 346.

BOOK XXI.

SECT. I. *The reign of Commodus, beginning of the iron age*, 363. *Commodus enters at once into the discharge of the imperial power. He hears at first the advice of his father's friends. His speech to the soldiers*, 365. *Flatterers induce him to return quickly to Rome. He proposes it to the council. Pompeianus opposes it, and wishes to engage him to finish the war*, 367. *Commodus is embarrassed. Imboldened with flatterers, he forms his resolution, treats with the barbarians, and returns to Rome*, 369. *He is received with great joy*, 370. *He triumphs over the Germans. He suffers his father's friends to govern for some time*, 371. *As to himself, he is employed entirely in debauchery. He gives his confidence to Perennis, an interested and ambitious flatterer*, 372. *Lucilla, his sister, forms a conspiracy against him*, 373. *The conspiracy fails. The punishment of Lucilla and the other conspirators*, 374. *Commodus's hatred of the senate. Paternus, pretorian prefect, accused of a new conspiracy*, 375. *He perishes, with several of the principal persons in the senate*, 376. *Didius Julianus absolved. Death of Crispina. Marcia, Commodus's concubine. Power and tyranny of Perennis. His ambitious projects and fall*, 377. *Contradiction between Herodian and Dion in regard to Perennis. Commodus appears desirous of changing his conduct, and of applying to business*, 380. *He returns to his effeminacy. Pertinax sent into Great Britain. War and seditions in that island*, 381. *Character of Ulpius Marcellus, who commanded there with Pertinax*, 382. *Pertinax, after experiencing great difficulties from the soldiers, desires and obtains his recal. The bad and tyrannical government of Cleander,*

der, who succeeded Perennis in his power, 383. *He causes to be destroyed Antisthus Burrhus, brother-in-law to the emperor, and Arrius Antoninus*, 385. *Insurrection of the people against Cleander*, 386. *Commodus sacrifices his minister, who perishes with his children and a great number of his creatures. Alarms of Commodus*, 388. *The danger he had run from the Marcomanni*, 389. *Commodus's life spent in cruelty and debauchery. His cruelties*, 391. *Of all the friends of Aurelius, three only spared by Commodus, Pompeianus, Pertinax, and Victorinus*, 393. *His ignominious conduct. His foolish vanity*, 396. *Calamities under his reign. Famine and fires*, 400. *There were few wars, and the particulars not very material*, 401. *Commodus universally despised and detested*, 402. *His fears. New and last fits of his rage*, 403. *A conspiracy formed against him*, 405. *He dies, poisoned and strangled*, 406. *Almost all his successors die, like him, a violent death. His memory is detested*, 407. *He erected no public work. An useful establishment of which he was the author. He does not prosecute Christians. Pollux and Athæneus have written of his times*, 408.

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

ROMAN EMPERORS,

FROM AUGUSTUS TO CONSTANTINE.

BOOK XVIII.

ANNALS OF THE REIGN OF NERVA.

C. FULVIUS VALENS. A. R. 847.
C. ANTISTIUS VETUS. A. C. 96.

Nerva proclaimed emperor through the interest of those that killed Domitian.

His government mild and gentle, too great lenity being the chief fault in it.

NERVA AUGUSTUS III. A. R. 848.
L. VIRGINIUS RUFUS III. A. C. 97.

The death of Virginius. Tacitus, consul by subrogation, pronounces his funeral oration.

Calpurnius Crassus conspires against Nerva, who pardons him.

The pretorians, resolving to revenge Domitian's death, and being encouraged thereto by their prefect Casperius Ælianus, assemble in a riotous manner, and force Nerva to give them up the murderers of his predecessor.

News of an advantage gained over the barbarians in Pannonia.

Nerva, finding that the empire wanted a stronger support than himself, adopts Trajan, who at that time commanded the army in Lower Germany.

NERVA AUGUSTUS IV.
TRAJANUS CÆSAR II.

Nerva dies towards the end of January.

NERVA.

SECT. I.

Nerva proclaimed and acknowledged emperor. Mildness of his character and government. He abolishes the law relating to high treason, recals the exiles, and punishes informers. Pliny courted by Regulus. He attacks Publicius Certus, the base oppressor of Helvidius. Nerva deprives Certus of the consulship which was designed him. Nerva's extreme facility. Saying of Mauricus. Another of Fronto. Nerva confirms by an edict all the gifts of his predecessor. Instances of his wisdom and goodness. He recals the pantomimes. Virginius's third consulship and death. Sedition of the pretorians, who force Nerva to give them up the murderers of Domitian. Trajan's adoption. Nerva's death.

BEFORE the conspirators killed Domitian, they took all proper measures to secure Nerva for his successor; and accordingly he was proclaimed and acknowledged emperor the very same day, which was the eighteenth of September. Nerva's chief friends were, Petronius Secundus, prefect of the pretorians, whose authority, without doubt, induced the cohorts under his command to declare in favour of the new emperor. The chamberlain Parthenius likewise assisted him with his credit among his friends. The senators wanted no solicitations to declare in favour of Nerva, whom they esteemed as much

Nerva proclaimed and acknowledged emperor. *Dio. Eutrop. Victor uterque.*

much as they hated Domitian. It was therefore with the greatest alacrity and readiness that they decreed him all the honours and titles which constituted the imperial dignity.

Capit. T. Anton. 1. et. Vict. Epit. in Nerva.

Amidst this universal satisfaction and applause, a wise friend ventured to speak a very different language to the new prince. Arrius Antoninus, grandfather to the emperor Titus Antoninus by the mother's side, embracing Nerva, said, he esteemed the empire happy in having him for chief. "But as "to yourself," added he, "I rather pity than com- "mend your fate; you lose the sweet tranquillity "of a private life, to be exposed to storms, fatigues, "and dangers; dangers which may affect, not on- "ly your life and person, but your hitherto unsul- "lied reputation. You will have to guard against "the snares and treacheries of your enemies, and "the greedy desires of your friends, whom it will "not be possible for you to satisfy without hurting "the public good, nor to refuse, without chan- "ging their zeal into hatred."

Arrius had a particular object in view when he apprised Nerva of these dangers. The pretorians regretted Domitian, and loudly insisted on having the authors of his death delivered up to them; nor was it without great difficulty that they were appeased by the remonstrances of the chief men of Rome, and Nerva's promise to give them a gratuity. They seemed content; but in reality the flame was only smothered for a while, and soon broke out again, as we shall see, with redoubled danger to Nerva.

Phil. Soph. 1, 7.

The legions in the provinces followed the impression and example of the capital, with this difference only, according to Philostratus, that the Pannonian army, when on the point of revolting, was pacified by the bare eloquence of Dionysius Chrysostomus the sophist, who had banished himself to that country. For my part, I own I cannot lay any great stress upon

upon a fact which has no better voucher than that fabulous writer.

Nerva's virtues well deserved the high post to which he was promoted. He was uncommonly mild and judicious, fond of all honest men, and a strict observer of the laws. Vigour and resolution were the only qualities wanting to make him an accomplished prince. Born, as he was, with a gentle and even timid disposition, we may readily judge it did not grow stronger by old age, and that * seventy years of life, together with a constitution naturally weak and sickly, may easily have made his mildness degenerate into weakness. Mildness of his character and government.

His government charmed the Romans, who were the more sensible of the blessings they enjoyed under him, as they were but just delivered from a state of abject slavery, in which they had endured all the miseries of tyranny. Pliny calls the beginning of Nerva's reign the epoch of the return of liberty. † Tacitus praises this wise prince for having known how to ally two things before irreconcileable and incompatible, the supreme authority vested in one man, and the liberty of the subject: to which he adds, that the age of public felicity may justly be said to have begun with Nerva. *Plin. IX. ep. 13.* *Tac. Agric. 3.*

His first care was to remedy the evils of the former government. He discharged all such as lay under prosecutions for pretended crimes of high treason, and entirely abolished that odious and cruel vexation, the terror of good men, and one of the main springs of tyranny. He suppressed the persecution against the church, ordering that none should He abolishes the law relating to high treason, recals the exiles, and punishes informers.

* I follow Eutropius and St Jerome, though Dion Cassius and Victor make Nerva, the one but sixty-five, and the other sixty-three years old. My reason for it is, that Eutropius's reckoning agrees best with what Pliny says; for he all along speaks of the emperor Nerva as of an aged, nay old prince.

† Quanquam primo statim beatissimi seculi ortu Nerva Cæsar res olim dissociabiles miscuerit principatum et libertatem.

should be molested for Judaism. He recalled the exiles, and annulled the sentences of confiscation unjustly pronounced against them. Among those whom this act of justice in the prince reinstated in their former condition, history mentions in particular Arulænus Rusticus, Arria the widow of Thrasea, and Fannia the daughter of Arria, and mother-in-law to Helvidius Priscus, put to death by Domitian; nor ought we to forget St John the apostle, who left the isle of Patmos, and returned to Ephesus.

Eus. Chron.

Not satisfied with protecting all whom calumny oppressed, nor with reinstating them in the possession of what had been unjustly taken from them, Nerva revenged them on their wicked persecutors; the freedmen and slaves, whose false accusations had caused the ruin of their patrons and masters, were punished with death; and it was enacted, That the testimony of a man of servile condition should never more be received in judgment, in any case whatever, against the person whose slave he had been: other informers, without being so severely handled, felt nevertheless the weight of Nerva's justice, that emperor reviving and enforcing the penalties decreed against them by Titus's ordinance before spoken of.

Among those who carried on that infamous traffic were some of the first rank and quality in Rome; their power and credit saved them, indeed, from the punishment they richly deserved; but the humiliation to which they were reduced gave joy and satisfaction to the public. The famous Regulus was of that number. Finding how matters turned, he began to fawn on and pay his court to Pliny, whose friend she had before persecuted, and who could not but remember his personal offence to him. He was afraid of being accused before the senate, and, to avoid it, had recourse to the mediation of all that had any influence over Pliny, begging them to intercede for him, and try to bring about a reconciliation,

Pliny courted by Regulus.

Plin. l. ep. 5.

ation, or at least to prevail on him to forget what passed. In effect, Pliny forbore prosecuting the wretch, * who was rich, subtle, and intriguing, courted by many, but feared by more, as a man capable of doing them infinite hurt: so true is it that fear operates much more strongly than affection. Regulus, too, had behaved with more caution and circumspection, during Domitian's reign, than he had done before, concealing his iniquitous transactions as much as he could. An open attack, made in full senate, and in downright violation of the laws, upon one of the best and worthiest citizens of Rome, seemed to Pliny an object more deserving his attention.

He attacks Publicius Certus, the base oppressor of Helvidius. *Plin. IX. ep.* 13.

The reader may remember how Helvidius Priscus, when accused in the senate, was basely and cruelly seized by an ancient pretor, called Publicius Certus, who helped to drag him to prison. Certus was rewarded for it by Domitian, at whose death he was intendant of the public treasury, and on the list of future consuls. This notorious criminal was the man that Pliny resolved to attack, out of respect for the memory of Helvidius, out of friendship for Arria and Fannia just returned from exile, and out of a strong desire to avenge the cause of virtue and public decency, so highly injured by that wretch. I could wish that a desire to distinguish himself, too had not been one of the motives that induced him to undertake so laudable a prosecution.

In the execution of this design, he behaved with extraordinary prudence and resolution; he let the first days of Nerva's reign pass, during which all were striving to take advantage of the favourable moment, tumultuously asking and obtaining justice against their private enemies, and at the same time taking care not to meddle with any that were rich

* Est enim locuples, factiosus; curatur à multis, timetur à pluribus, quod plerumque sortius amore est. *Plin.*

or powerful. Pliny thought it best to let that first hurry be over, and to give people time to cool and reflect, that every thing might be done in proper order, and Certus not have it in his power to say he was borne down by the torrent of public hatred and aversion to the late administration. He was resolved to act singly, if necessary; but thought it incumbent on him first to acquaint Helvidius's widow Anteia, his mother-in-law Fannia, and Fannia's mother Arria, with his design, and to know whether they also would be parties against Certus. They agreed to it with joy, and Pliny prepared matters for the prosecution in his and their joint names.

At the very next meeting of the senate he stood up, and desired leave to speak; he talked of general things at first, and was heard with great attention; but the moment he opened the real subject of his address, and began to speak pointedly against Certus, every one present was astonished, and exclaimed against him; some asked him, What business he had to speak out of his turn; what made him meddle with and trouble the senate about an affair which the magistrates had not thought proper to lay before them? Others cried out, "What! new dangers "still! it is with difficulty that we have escaped "hitherto; let us at least live in peace now." Pliny heard their clamours unmoved; their noise gave him not the least disturbance or uneasiness*, being conscious, as he himself tells us, of the merits of his cause, and of the wide difference between displeasing and being disapproved of. He was obliged, however, to discontinue his intended speech, the consul ordering him to stay till it came to his turn to speak.

Whilst other affairs were canvassing, a person of consular dignity came up to Pliny, and began to reprove

* Tantùm susceptæ rei honestas valet, tantùmque ad fiduciam vel metum differt, nolint homines quod facias, an non probent.

reprove him very seriously for the boldness of the step he had taken; at the same time advising him not to proceed further in it, but to make some excuse for what had already passed: "You will be "taken notice of," said he to him, "by all succeeding princes." "With all my heart," answered Pliny; "if they are bad ones, I care not what notice they take of me." This first attack was hardly over, when a second adviser stepping up to him, "What are you doing," said he to Pliny; "what "are you thinking of? Are you not afraid of the "danger you are exposing yourself to? How can "you rely upon the present state of things, when "you have no sort of assurance that they will last? "You attack a man who is already intendant of "the public treasury, and who will soon be consul; "whose credit is immense, and whose friends are "very powerful." He then mentioned in particular the commander of the Syrian legions, whose reputation, Pliny says, was not over good. To all these remonstrances he still returned the same answer: "* I know what I am doing; I have weighed it "well, and have foreseen all that can happen; nor "do I refuse being punished, if it must be so, for "a good action; for such I think it, to sue for "justice against so bad a man."

In the mean time the senators began to vote; the first speakers, who were the heads of the assembly, undertook, almost all of them, to defend Certus, applying to him in particular what had been spoken only in general terms; for Certus had not been absolutely named till then. When it came to Pliny's turn, he proceeded boldly in the work he had begun; first refuting all that had been advanced in favour of Certus, and then displaying his arguments against

* Omnia præcepi, atque animo mecum ante peregi. Nec recuso, si ita casus attulerit, luere pœnas ob honestissimum factum, dum flagitiosissimum ulciscor.

against him with such solidity and strength of reasoning, as, joined to his own firmness and resolution, brought every man over to his side of the question. The only one that even attempted to reply was Veiento, but none would hear him; whereupon some words arising, the consul adjourned the senate without coming to any determination. All complimented Pliny, and gave him joy, acknowledging themselves indebted to him for having cleared the senate of the odious imputation of favouring its own members, and treating them with lenity, whilst others were punished with excessive rigour.

Nerva deprives Certus of the consulship that was designed him.

The affair went no further. Nerva would not suffer it to be brought again before the senate; but he deprived Certus of the consulship which was designed him; doing, by that means, justice, but by halves indeed; though even that may be thought somewhat from a prince who knew better how to reward the good than punish the bad.

Nerva's extreme facility. Saying of Mauricus. *Plin. IV. ep.* 22.

This excessive facility of Nerva was reproached him, not rudely indeed, but severely, by Junius Mauricus, often mentioned before. That grave senator, after his return from exile, being one day at the emperor's table, saw, among other guests, Veiento, one of Domitian's instruments of tyranny. The conversation turned upon blind Catullus Messalinus, then dead, but whose memory was detested by all on account of his odious informations, and the bloody measures he was always the first to propose in the senate. Every one spoke ill of him, as he deserved; whereupon Nerva, addressing himself to the company, "What do you think," said he to them, "would become of him, if he was "alive now?" "He would be at supper with us," replied Mauricus.

He could not have said better nor a truer thing. Nerva would have been glad to see virtue triumph; but he knew not how to punish vice, or prevent

nt the abuse of good. The liberty he granted to take revenge on informers degenerated into licentiousness. Dion Cassius mentions on this occasion a remarkable saying of Fronto, a man of consular dignity and excellent good sense, who, seeing how accusations were multiplied every day, and that there was no end to them, in consequence of which the minds of all were heated and indisposed, ventured to say, "It is bad, without doubt, to be under a prince who suffers nobody to do any thing: "but it is not much better to have one who allows "every body to do every thing."

Another of Fronto. *Dio.*

I cannot, however, adopt this censure in its full extent. There is rather too much ill humour in it. Fronto did not do justice to Nerva's government, which, his too great indulgence excepted, was really good, and formed on the model of that of Titus. Like Titus, he confirmed by an edict all the gifts his predecessor had made. Pliny has preserved that edict, in which the emperor's goodness of heart is striking. "I have * preferred, says Nerva, the pub- "lic good to my own repose. My design in ac- "cepting the empire was, to grant new benefits, "and confirm old ones. Let those who have received "any from my predecessor be under no uneasiness, "nor fear that the memory of the prince to whom "they

Nerva confirms by an edict all the gifts of his predecessor.

Plin. X. ep. 66.

* Hoc sibi quisque civium meorum spondere potest, me securitatem omnium quieti meæ prætulisse, ut et libenter nova beneficia conferrem, et ante me concessa servarem. Ne tamen aliquam gaudiis publicis afferat hæsitationem vel eorum qui impetraverunt diffidentia, vel ejus memoria qui præstitit, necessarium pariter credidi ac lætum, obviam dubitantibus indulgentiam meam mittere. Nolo existimet quisquam, quæ alio principe vel privatim vel publicè consecutus, ideò saltem à me rescindi, ut potius mihi debeat, si illa rata et certa. Nec gratulatio ullius instauratis egit precibus: et qui habent, me, quem fortuna imperii vultu meliore respexit, novis beneficiis vacare patiantur; et ea demum sciant rogandi esse, quæ non habent.

" they owe them, may be any ways prejudicial
" them. I do not intend even to annul his grants,
" and make a merit of giving them again. Those
" who enjoy them shall not be put to the trouble
" of getting them confirmed a new. My care shall
" be to deal out gifts to all: let it be the care of
" others to ask me for what they have not."

Instances of his wisdom and goodness. *Dio. Victor uterque.*

Nerva was sincere in what he said, and his actions proved him so. He laid out considerable sums in the purchase of lands, which he afterwards gave away to poor citizens. He provided for the maintenance and education of poor children of both sexes throughout all Italy: numbers of towns and cities, afflicted by various calamities, were relieved by his beneficence; and all on whom an additional tax had been laid, because they had not been punctual in the payment of their tributes, were eased of that burden.

Plin. Pan. 62.

To enable him to do these and many other acts of generosity, he made the senate appoint commissaries to inspect the expenses of the state, and lessen them. At the same time he reduced his own expenses; abolished several feasts and shows, in which vast sums were squandered away; and when at last he wanted money, he sold great quantities of furniture and jewels, and lands, partly his own personal estate, and partly demesnes of the empire.

Full of regard and deference for the senate, he never decided any affair till after he had advised with the heads of that august assembly: and, what Titus was the first that did, and Domitian never would do, Nerva repeated, solemnly swearing never to put a senator to death. He kept his word. Even when Calpurnius Crassus, a descendant of the ancient Crassi, conspired against him with some other members of the senate, he followed strictly the example Titus had set on a like occasion. He made the conspirators sit next to him at a public show, put the swords of the gladiators into their hands to examine,

and

and consequently with them his own life, had they been minded to take it then. The only revenge he took was to banish Calpurnius Crassus to Tarentum, without hearing the remonstrances of all the senators, who blamed his clemency as too great and very dangerous.

Nerva administered justice with great assiduity and discernment. A knowledge of the civil law was in a manner hereditary in his family. His grandfather * was one of the greatest civilians in Rome. He confirmed Domitian's law against making eunuchs, and abolished Claudius's, by which uncles were permitted to marry their nieces. I have already spoken of the tax of the twentieth penny, *Vol. I.* laid by Augustus on all collateral inheritances. To the exceptions already admitted by that law, Nerva added others, by which he planned the way for Trajan to extend his equity and munificence further in that respect.

By these instances of Nerva's wisdom and good conduct, we may judge it was not without reason that he valued himself on having governed the empire, *Dio.* so as to be able at any time to give a good account of his administration, and return to the station of a private man, without fear or apprehension.

He never lost the modesty becoming his station, constantly refusing all great honours that were offered him, and forbidding any statues, either of gold or silver, to be erected to him; his delight was to raise men of merit from a private station to almost an equality with himself.

It is pity he should have given any one room to tax him with having favoured public corruption, by recalling the pantomimes which his predecessor had banished; but the people insisted loudly on their return, and Nerva's temper was such, that they must have been strong reasons indeed that could have

He recalls the pantomimes. *Plin. Pan.* 48.

* Cocceius Nerva, who starved himself to death under Tiberius. *See Vol. II.*

have made him withstand the tumultuous cries of a seditious mob.

Virginius's third consulship, and death.

Nerva could not give a better proof of his high regard for virtue, than by honouring the celebrated Virginius with a third consulship, the same year that he was consul himself for the third time.

History takes no notice of that great man Virginius from the time of his gloriously refusing the empire when offered him after the defeat of Vindex, and his persisting in that refusal more than once on other occasions, till this third consulship, with which Nerva was pleased to grace his term of life, for he was near eighty-three years old when he entered on it. No doubt can well be made of Vespasian's and Titus's regard for him. They were both too great friends to virtue not to set a just value upon so estimable a man.

Plin. ep. II. 1. V. 3. VI. 10. IX. 19.

He lived to read his own praises in the writings of the poets and historians of those days: he enjoyed his glory, and, as Pliny expresses it, lived with posterity. Pleasing as such a scene must have been, it gave him not the least pride or vanity. His constant modesty spoke the real greatness of his soul: and Pliny, whose tutor he was, whom he loved tenderly, and who, notwithstanding the disproportion of their ages, always kept up an intimate connexion with him, assures us he never heard him speak more than once of that great and glorious action of his, the refusal of the empire. The occasion on which he mentioned it, deserves to be taken notice of. Cluvius Rufus, a famous historian, accosting Virginius one day—"You "know, said he to him, what fidelity is requi- "red in a historian. I therefore hope you will "not be angry with me, if you find any thing in "my writings that is not quite pleasing to you. "Do

* Legit scripta de se carmina, legit historias, et posteritati suæ interfuit. *Plin.* II. 1.

"* Do not you know, answered Virginius, that I did what I did, that writers may say of me whatever they think proper." There is a dignity in this reply which must have made Cluvius repent his fulsome compliment.

Virginius, who was pretty much in years when Domitian ascended the throne, retired then from all public affairs, spending the greater part of his life at a country-house he had near Alsium, which he called the nest of his old age. He seldom went out, nor ever appeared in Rome, unless it were to discharge the necessary duties of his function, or to serve a friend, in which light he always considered Pliny. The modest obscurity in which he concealed himself, screened him from the furious rage of a suspicious tyrant.

Nerva being seated on the throne, Virginius began again to enjoy the honours and distinction due to his uncommon merit; but it was for a short time only. Being appointed consul for the third time, as I before said, he prepared a speech to be pronounced before the senate on that occasion, with a compliment of thanks to the emperor for the favour done him, and often rehearsed it before hand in his own house, to have it the more perfect. One day that he was so employed, holding a book in his hand, the book dropped, and Virginius stooping to take it up, his foot slipped, he fell, and in the fall broke his thigh. The accident was the more dangerous as he was very old: he lingered a long time under it, and at length died. The honours of a public funeral were bestowed upon him; and Pliny observes, that the same good fortune which accompanied him whilst he lived, did not forsake him even after his death; the greatest orator of those days, Cornelius Tacitus, then consul, being the man who pronounced his funeral panegyric.

Virginius

* Tunc, Cluvi, ignoras, ideo me fecisse quod feci, ut esset liberum vobis scribere quæ libuisset. *Plin.* IX. 19.

Virginius wrote his own epitaph in two lines, mentioning that one action only by which he thought himself most illustrated. * "Here lies Rufus, said "he, who, after repelling Vindex, secured the em-"pire, not to himself, but to his country."

This hero was a patron of learning, and sometimes amused himself with writing verses, not always over chaste. Pliny reckons him among those whose example he quotes as a sanction for his carrying the spirit of gaiety beyond the strict bounds of decency in some of his poetical performances; not considering, that it is not the foibles of great men which ought to be imitated, but their virtues.

Sedition of the pretorians, who force Nerva to give them up the murderers of Domitian.] *Dio. Victor uterque. Plin. Pan. 5, 6.*

Nerva was respected and beloved, and, from the time of his accession to the empire, enjoyed the peaceful calm his upright sentiments justly entitled him to. But his extreme facility, for which good men could not but love him, exposed him to the outrages of the wicked and seditious. He experienced it very disagreeably in an insurrection of the pretorians, who, spurred on by Casperius Ælianus, one of their prefects, were daring enough to besiege their emperor in his palace, calling out aloud for justice against the murderers of Domitian, and insisting on their being delivered up to them. Nerva tried all he could to save those to whom he was indebted for the empire. His innate gratitude and goodness of heart gave him additional strength and courage. Presenting himself to the furious soldiers, and offering them his naked breast, he begged of them to stab him, rather than persist in their demand. But even that was not sufficient to stop their rage, the gentleness of Nerva's government having taught them to slight his power. They insisted obstinately on having their victims given up, and Nerva was forced to consent. They gave the pretorian prefect

* Hic situs est Rufus, pulso qui Vindice quondum
Imperium asseruit, non sibi, sed patriæ. *Plin.* VI. 10.

præfect, Petronius Secundus, but one blow, of which he died; but took an inhuman pleasure in mangling and tormenting the chamberlain Parthenius. This was not all. Casperius, not content with having * humbled the supreme authority by divesting it of its darling prerogative, the power of screening those whom it protects, compelled Nerva even to approve of what was done, and to tell the people that it was by his directions, and that he thought himself obliged to the soldiers for having delivered the world from a set of most flagitious wretches.

This barbarous scene was, however, productive of great good, the adoption of Trajan. Nerva was sensible that he stood in need of a support, and wisely sought for one, not in his own family, nor among his acquaintance, but from real and approved merit. Trajan was them an he wanted. But, before we proceed further, it may not be improper to give some account of his origin and first rise. Trajan's adoption. *Plin. Pan.* 7—10, and 13—15. *Victor uterque. Eutrop.*

Trajan was born at Italica in Bœtica, of parents originally Italian. The founder of that city was Scipio Africanus, who, went he left Spain, after driving out the Carthaginians, settled such of his troops as were superannuated, or disabled from further service by their wounds, in a place near the river Betis. The new city increased and flourished, and became municipal, and a Roman colony. Sevilla Veja. The Guadalquiver.

Trajan's father was the first of his family that attained honours in Rome. We have had occasion to speak of him several times before, and have always found him behave with great distinction, especially in the war against the Jews. Vespasian created him a patrician: he was afterwards consul, and obtained the ornaments of triumph.

* Ablata mitissimo seni servandorum hominum protestas, eripumque principi illud in principatu beatissimum, quòd nihil cogitur. *Plin.*

His son, when but a youth, bore him company on the Euphrates and the Rhine, and gained great reputation in arms when scarcely past the tender years of life. He inured himself to fatigue and hardships, making long marches on foot, like the meanest soldier, familiarizing himself, by constant practice, with every military exercise, and assiduously endeavouring to acquire the superior qualifications requisite in a man destined to command armies. He was popular and affable, but always with a becoming dignity. The soldiers loved, and his equals esteemed him. He merited by that means the honours to which his birth entitled him, and was made consul in ordinary in Domitian's reign. His consulship being ended, he seems to have retired to Spain, for it was from thence that Domitian sent for him, to put him at the head of the legions in Lower Germany. In that high post, one of the most important the empire could bestow, he continued to behave just as he had done before when no more than tribune; performing his exercises as usual, subjecting himself to the fatigues of war, and being affable to all, without prejudice to his authority. Such were the qualifications which recommended him to Nerva, to whom, as I before observed, he was no way related, nor was he even intimate or familiar with him.

Plin. Pan. 1. Trajan was a handsome man, tall, well made, and strong; his constitution hale and robust; his features noble and majestic; his years mature, but free from all infirmities of old age, though he wore the venerable marks of it in his grey hairs; he was then turned of forty.

An advantage gained by the Roman arms in Pannonia gave Nerva an opportunity to make known the resolution which his love for his country had induced him to take. Adding the name of Germanicus to his own on that occasion, he ascended the capitol to offer up to Jupiter the branch of laurel that was sent him as a token of victory, and in presence

presence of the whole multitude assembled there, declared his adoption of Trajan. From thence returning to the senate, he shared all his prerogatives with his adopted son, giving him the titles of Cæsar, Germanicus, and Emperor, together with part of the power of tribune; so that, in fact, it was rather a colleague than a successor that he chose.

This election was a very extraordinary and perfect instance of disinterestedness on both sides. Nerva's sole view in it was the public welfare, and Trajan was so far from soliciting the highest post the world afforded, that he was quite ignorant of what was doing at Rome, and found himself at once declared the emperor's son and partner in his power, without his having so much as thought of it. He was at Cologne when he received the news of his adoption; and the greatest pleasure it gave him was, that it would enable him to correct the evils which had rendered it necessary. His bare name put an immediate stop to the sedition, and restored tranquillity in Rome; his vigour and resolution soon completed the work, and revenged the insulted majesty of empire. Nerva himself requested that vengeance from him by a letter written with his own hand, wherein he made use of a line of Homer, taken out of Chryses's prayer to Apollo: "* Let the Greeks expatiate by your darts the tears "they have made me shed." Trajan ordered Casperius Ælianus, and the rest of the ringleaders of the sedition, to attend him, and rid the state of them, by putting some to death, and banishing others.

Trajan's adoption was the last remarkable event in Nerva's reign. He did not indeed abdicate the *empire, but committed the care of all affairs to the worthy successor he had made choice of, devoting the remainder of his days to the repose and quiet* Nerva's death.

* Τίσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν. Hom. Il. i. 42.

which his age and infirmities required. He lived in that manner three months, at the end of which, imprudently giving way to a sudden start of passion against Regulus, who was but too capable of provoking him, a fever ensued, and he died towards the end of January, in his fourth consulship, Trajan, whose second it was, being then his colleague. He reigned somewhat more than sixteen months, and lived seventy-two years.

Tillem. He was the first emperor of foreign extraction. His family was originally of Crete, but naturalized Roman, at least from the time of his great-grandfather, who was a favourite with Augustus. He was born at Narni in Umbria. He was the son, grandson, and great-grandson of consuls, and was twice consul himself before he was made emperor. He was fond of poetry, and excelled in it, if what Martial says of him be true. This was probably the reason why Nero took a liking to him, and granted him the ornaments of triumph when he was only pretor elect. He is said to have been too much addicted to wine; nor are his morals quite untainted, as we before observed in speaking of the corruption that prevailed in the beginning of Domitian's reign.

ANNALS

ANNALS OF THE REIGN OF TRAJAN.

NERVA AUGUSTUS IV. A. R. 849.
TRAJANUS CÆSAR II. A. C. 98.

Trajan receives, at Cologne, the news of Nerva's death, and is proclaimed Augustus.

He remains in Germany all this year.

A. CORNELIUS PALMA. A. R. 850.
C. SOSIUS SENECIO. A. C. 99.

Trajan makes his entry into Rome on foot, without any show.

He wins the hearts of all by the mildness, moderation, and wisdom of his government.

He receives the title of Father of his Country; that of *Optimus*, or *Best*, is likewise decreed him, but not generally made use of till several years after.

On his accepting a third consulship, he submits to all the ceremonial observed by private men on that occasion.

TRAJANUS AUGUSTUS III. A. R. 851.
M. JULIUS FRONTO III. A. C. 100.

Trajan, being consul, swears to observe the laws.

He expresses the utmost deference for the senate, the members of which show their grateful sense of it by the highest acclamations of praise.

The affair of Marius Priscus.

The affair of Classicus.

Trajan's panegyric pronounced by Pliny the consul in September.

Adrian married to Sabina, daughter of Trajan's nephew.

A. R. 852. A. C. 101. TRAJANUS AUGUSTUS IV.
SEX. ARTICULEIUS PÆTUS.

Adrian questor to the emperor.

The custom of choosing magistrates by ballot introduced by the senate.

War with the Dacians. Decebalus, their king, forced to submit to very hard terms. Peace is granted him, and Trajan makes a triumphant entry into Rome this year, or the year following.

Adrian accompanied Trajan in this war. Lusius Quietus had a considerable command in it, and distinguished himself greatly.

A. R. 853. A. C. 102. ..... SURANUS.
L. LICINIUS SURA.

The death of Frontinus. Pliny succeeds him in the dignity of augur.

Gymnastic games abolished at Vienne.

Revival of the old ordinances, by which advocates were forbidden to receive money from their clients.

Trajan's ordinances against bribery and corruption, and to disqualify all such as had not land or houses in Italy, to the amount of at least one third of what they were worth, from being candidates for offices and employments under the government.

A. R. 854. A. C. 103. TRAJANUS AUGUSTUS V.
L. MAXIMUS.

The port of Centum-Cellæ, now Civita Vecchia, built by Trajan.

Causes

Causes decided by him with great equity.
Pliny sets out for his government of Pontus and Bithynia.

L. Lucinius Sura II. A. R. 853. A. C. 104.
..... Marcellus.

The golden palace burnt.
Pliny's letter to Trajan concerning the Christians.
Second war with the Dacians. Trajan builds a bridge over the Danube.

Ti. Julius Candidus II. A. R. 856. A. C. 105.
A. Julius Quadratus II.

Earthquakes in Greece and Asia.
Adrian tribune of the people.
Decebalus, conquered and driven to despair, kills himself. Dacia reduced to a Roman province. Colonies settled in Dacia and the neighbouring countries. Trajan's second triumph.
Conquest of Arabia Petrea by Cornelius Palma.

..... Commodus. A. R. 857. A. C. 106.
..... Cerealis.

A high-road made over the Pomptine marshes.
Conspiracy of Crassus, who is only banished for it.
Trajan undertakes a war against the Parthians, and to that end goes into the East.

L. Licinius Sura III. A. R. 858. A. C. 107.
C. Sosius Senecio II.

Adrian pretor.
Trajan conquers Armenia. He refuses the suit of Parthamasiris, who came to his camp to request the investiture of that crown. Parthamasiris slain in battle.

A. R. 859. A. C. 108. AP. ANNIUS TREBONIANUS GALLUS.
M. ATILIUS METELLUS BRADUA.

Adrian commands in the Lower Pannonia. It was probably in this year that Trajan conquered Mesopotamia. The cities of Batne, Singara, and Nisibis, taken. Lusius Quietus was the person who took Singara.

Chosröes, king of the Parthians, gives hostages to Trajan. Peace, or truce, concluded between the Parthians and the Romans.

Arabia Petrea reduced, and made a Roman province.

Trajan makes the people who dwelt north of Armenia, between the Euxine and Caspian seas, acknowledge his power.

These exploits may have busied Trajan for some years, during which we have no particular detail to give.

We suppose, too, that he returned to Rome, and spent several of those years there.

A. R. 860. A. C. 109. A. CORNELIUS PALMA II.
..... TULLUS.

Adrian consul by subrogation.

A. R. 861. A. C. 110. PRISCIANUS, or CRISPINUS.
..... ORFITUS.

A. R. 862. A. C. 111. C. CALPURNIUS PISO.
M. VETTIUS BOLANUS.

A. R. 863. A. C. 112. TRAJANUS AUGUSTUS VI.
T. SEXTIUS AFRICANUS.

L. Publilius Celsus II. A. R. 864. A. C. 115.
C. Clodius Crispinus.

Q. Ninnius Hasta. A. R. 865. A. C. 114.
P. Manilius Vopiscus.

Trajan dedicates his magnificent square in Rome, and erects in it the fine pillar that bears his name; after which he returns into the East to renew the war against the Parthians

L. Vipstanus Messala. A. R. 866. A. C. 115.
M. Vergilianus Pedo.

Terrible earthquake at Antioch. The consul Pedo perishes in it, and Trajan himself is in great danger.

He consults the oracle of Heliopolis.

He conquers Assyria.

He returns back towards Babylon, repasses the river Tigris, and takes the cities of Ctesiphon and Susa.

The Jews of Cyrene, Egypt, and Cyprus, revolt.

L. Ælius Lamia. A. R. 867. A. C. 116.
Ælianus Veter.

Trajan sails down the Tigris into the Persian gulph, and from thence to the ocean.

He takes a sea-port on the south coast of Arabia Felix.

The provinces conquered by Trajan from the Parthians, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria, take advantage of his absence to revolt.

He receives intelligence of it at Babylon, the ruins of which place he was visiting, and paying his respects to the memory of Alexander the Great.

He

He is obliged to renew the war, in order to bring those rebellious provinces again under subjection.

He makes Parthamaspates king of the Parthians.

He lays siege to Atra, but is obliged to raise it.

The Jews reduced by Martius Turbo in Egypt and Cyrene.

Trajan orders Lusius Quietus to clear Mesopotamia of all the Jewish race. They are conquered, and Quietus is made governor of Palestine.

The port of Ancona made.

A. R. 868. A. C. 117. ..... QUINTIUS NIGER.
C. VIPSTANUS APRONIANUS.

Trajan's sickness. He remains in a languishing condition.

He sets out to return to Rome, leaving Adrian at the head of his army in Syria.

All Trajan's conquests in the East lost to the Romans.

He dies at Selinontum in Cilicia, and Adrian succeeds him in the empire by a forged adoption, the work of the empress Plotina.

Trajan ranked among the gods. His ashes carried to Rome, and buried under his pillar.

TRAJAN.

SECT. II.

Trajan the best and greatest prince the Romans ever had. Divine honours decreed Nerva. Trajan's letter to the senate. The barbarians kept in awe. Discipline restored. Trajan refuses the consulship. He returns to Rome. His modesty on that occasion. He accepts the title of Father of his Country. His entry into Rome. He distributes a largess among the people, and reckons his children as part of them. He procures plenty in Rome by the mildness of his government. Trajan's care to remedy several calamities. He clears Rome of the infamous tribe of informers. His care to prevent all abuses of the revenues of the exchequer. He moderates the tax of the twentieth penny. His frugality makes him rich. Merit esteemed and honoured by Trajan. Noble speech of Trajan to his pretorian prefect. His sentiments, when but a private man, were the rule of his conduct when emperor. He had friends, because he knew the value of friendship. His confidence in Sura. His friendship was disinterested. He was easy of access. An easy freedom reigned at his table. Trajan fond of hunting. Effects of the prince's good example. The people desire the expulsion of the pantomimes. Gymnastic combats suppressed at Vienne. Trajan protects the arts and sciences. His moderation with respect to the possessions of private men. He sells or gives away several of the imperial palaces. Instead of building for himself, he reserves his magnificence for public structures. Plain and strong demonstrations of the public regard and veneration

veneration for Trajan. He prefers them to all extraordinary honours. The surname of BEST *given him. Acclamations of the senate and people full of tenderness and affection, and well deserved by a thousand instances of wisdom and goodness. The affair of Marius Priscus. The affair of Classicus. Pliny's consulship and panegyric. Largius Macædo, an ancient pretor, murdered by his slaves. Beginning of Adrian's elevation by his marriage with Sabina, the daughter of Trajan's nephew. Trajan's fourth consulship. Adrian appointed questor to the emperor. War with the Dacians. Their king sues for peace, and obtains it, but on very hard terms. Trajan's triumph. Combats of gladiators. The pantomimes reinstated. Two years of peace. Trajan applies himself to the cares of government. The death of Frontinus. His character and works. Pliny succeeds him in the dignity of augur. The custom of choosing magistrates by ballot introduced by the senate. Bribery checked. Candidates for offices obliged to have landed estates in Italy. Revival of the ancient ordinances by which advocates were forbidden to receive any thing from their clients. Sundry affairs judged by Trajan with great equity and penetration. Trajan's modesty and engaging affability at table. The port of Centum-Cellæ. Port of Ancona. Pliny sets out for his government of Pontus and Bithynia. Pliny's letter to Trajan concerning the Christians. Trajan's answer. Persecution of the church under Trajan. Pliny's death. His character, taken from his own letters, by M. Rollin. Remarkable instance of Pliny's probity. Friendship between Pliny and Tacitus. Tacitus seems to have outlived Pliny. The order of his works. His birth and life, so far as we know of them. Death of Silius Italicus. A short sketch of his life. Death of Martial. Juvenal wrote most of his satires in Trajan's reign. Death of the informer Regulus. Instances of his*

audaciousness

audaciousness and villany. A child of thirteen years of age wins the prize for poetry.

Trajan the best and greatest prince the Romans ever had.

TRAJAN is justly esteemed the best and greatest prince the Romans ever had. Some, indeed, may have equalled him in point of goodness, and others may be found among those who went before, or came after him, no way his inferiors in the art of war; but what raises him eminently above them all is, that every talent, every virtue, which they possessed separately, was united in him; and he thereby commanded and deserved the esteem and admiration of mankind. Those talents and those virtues were so conspicuous in all he did, they shone so bright throughout his whole conduct, during a reign of almost twenty years, as truly entitles him to the first place among the Roman emperors. Nothing was wanting to make him a perfect prince, but to have been somewhat less the hero.

The affairs of Germany must have laid Trajan under a kind of necessity of remaining in the neighbourhood of the Rhine and Danube, since neither his adoption, nor the death of Nerva, were able to bring him back to Rome. When he knew his adoptive father was no more, and that by his death he was become master of the empire, his first care was to discharge the duties of gratitude and filial piety incumbent on him. Agreeably to the sacrilegious custom of Paganism, Nerva was ranked among the gods, and a temple, priest, and altar, were decreed him. At the same time Trajan wrote to the senate with his own hand a letter, whereby he renewed the engagement Nerva had before entered into, to respect* the life of every senator, and never to put one of them to death.

Divine honours decreed Nerva. Traj n's letter to the senate. A. R. 849. *Plin. Pan.* 11. *Dio.*

He

* I deviate somewhat from the text of Dion Cassius, or his abbreviator, according to which Trajan promised not to take away

The barbarians kept in awe.

He spent the whole year of his second consulship, which was the first of his reign, in Germany. We are at a loss to say what particular exploits he performed there; but we know in general that he kept the barbarians in such awe, that even when the Danube was frozen over, they were afraid to cross it to make their usual inroads. Trajan, as wise and prudent as he was brave and valiant, at the same time checked the ardour of his own troops, whom he would not by any means suffer to enter the enemy's territories. His conduct had the desired effect. The Germans, who made slight of the Roman arms whilst Domitian lived, began once more to fear them. They sued for peace, and gave hostages to Trajan.

Plin. Pan. 12—19.

Discipline restored.

Another object, well worthy the consideration of a great prince, likewise busied him in the beginning of his reign; that was, to restore military discipline, not only in the army under his own immediate command, but in all the other troops of the empire. Domitian's perpetual distrusts were such, that all the general officers were afraid of behaving too well. They let the troops go on as they pleased, and neglected every thing, for fear of being thought criminal if they attempted to set matters right. Trajan had too much merit of his own to be alarmed at it in others, especially in his inferiors; on the contrary, he studied to inspire them, both by his orders and example, with all the spirit and activity requisite to make the soldiers submissive to their chiefs, and formidable to their enemies. That his lieutenants might be respected, he

away the life or honour of any honest man. That would have been a vague promise, and such a one as the greatest tyrant might have made, as well as the best of princes. I have endeavoured to express what my author should have said, rather than what he has said.

he *honoured them himself, never attempting to eclipse them by the superior radiancy of imperial majesty, but insisting on all occasions that they should enjoy the full extent of their prerogatives and power.

Trajan was still in Germany in the beginning of the year of Rome 850, in which Palma and Senecio were consuls. It was a settled custom for the emperors to take upon them the consulship immediately after their accession to the throne; and accordingly the senate invited Trajan to follow the example of his predecessors in that respect; but his modesty was such, that he thought his having been consul at the time when he succeeded to the empire upon the death of Nerva, was a sufficient compliance with that custom. He therefore refused the new consulship which was offered him, and let others have the honour of opening that year.

Trajan refuses the consulship.

Plin. Pan. 56—58.

Resolving at last to return to Rome, whither he was called by the unanimous voice of all, he set out with a train becoming an emperor, but, at the same time, perfectly well disciplined and orderly. The countries through which he passed felt neither vexation, rapine, nor injustice. Domitian's waste and depredations, when he travelled that same road, were still fresh in the minds of all; and Trajan, to make the contrast yet more striking, published an exact account of the expenses of his predecessor's journey and of his own, and ordered it to be posted up, that all might see the difference. Pliny addresses the following encomium to him on that occasion, accompanied with a very just reflection: "In † publishing the account of the charges of "both

He returns to Rome. His modesty on that occasion. A. R. 850.

Plin. Pan. 20.

* Tu major quidem omnibus eras, sed sine ullius diminutione major: eamdem auctoritatem præsente te quisque, quam absente, retinebat. Quinetiam plerisque ex eo reverentia accesserat, quòd tu quoque illos reverebare. *Plin.*

† Non tam pro tua gloria, quàm pro utilitate communi, edicto subjecisti quid in utrumque vestrûm esset impensum. Assuescat

" both your journies, it was less your own honour " than the public good that you had in view. It is " proper that the emperor should accustom himself " to account with the empire; that he should lay it " down as a rule in all his journies, and make the " public acquainted with the expenses he has been " at. The consequence will be, that he will spend " nothing he need be ashamed of making known."

He accepts the title of *Father of his Country.* *Plin. Pan.* 21.

Trajan was on his return to Rome at the time when, according to Pliny, he accepted the title of *Father of his Country*, which the senate had offered him long before. He was willing to deserve that noble title before he took it; nor did he at last receive it so much for the honour of the thing, as that it might be a tie which should oblige him to treat his subjects as his children.

His entry into Rome. 22, 23.

His entry into Rome, more like the return of a father to his beloved family than the first entrance of a sovereign into his metropolis, was a further proof that those were his real sentiments. He walked on foot, preceded by his lictors, who observed a modest silence all the way, and followed by a few companies of soldiers, as quiet and orderly as any of the citizens. *His returning emperor to a place which had never before seen him more than a private man, made no sort of alteration in him; equalling himself to all, he aimed at superiority in virtue only; he knew his old friends again, and took a pleasure in being known by them; the senators and chiefs of the order of knights were graciously saluted and taken notice of by him; every body was allowed to accost him, and the crowd was such that he was forced to stop several times.

Two

suescat imperator cum imperio calculum ponere, sic exeat, sic redeat, tanquam rationem redditurus: edicat quid absumpserit; ita fiet ut non absumat quod pudeat edicere.

* Ut reversus imperator unde privatus exieras, agnoscis, agnosceris! Eosdem nos, eundem te putas, par omnibus, et hoc tantùm cæteris major, quo melior. *Plin. Pan.* 21.

Two motives could not but make the concourse of people infinite on this occasion: first, the general curiosity of men to see such a ceremony; and, secondly, their love and affection for a prince endowed with such uncommon modesty and goodness. Spectators of every age and sex flocked together; even the* sick crawled out to feast their eyes with so pleasing a sight; some cried out, they had lived long enough, since they saw Trajan at the head of the empire; and others, that they would not wish to live longer, but to see him reign; mothers thought themselves blessed in having children, and congratulated them on the advantages reserved for them, under a government whose only care would be to make them happy.

Amidst such joyful acclamations, so pleasing to a noble mind, Trajan ascended to the capitol, and from thence went to the imperial palace, which he entered with the same composure as if he had been going into his own private house. The empress Plotina, his wife, behaved with equal modesty. As she was going up the steps of the palace, she turned round, and addressed these remarkable words to the crowd that followed: "Such as I enter here, "such I am determined to remain; fortune shall "never change me." *Dion.*

Trajan's popularity and amiable behaviour was *entirely natural and void of artifice. It flowed from his heart, as his actions plainly showed. Hitherto he had paid the troops but half the gratification it* was usual for the emperors to give them on their accession to the throne; but the people, whom it seemed

He distributes a largess among the people, and reckons children as part of them. *Plin. Pan.* 25—28.

* Ægri quoque, neglecto medentium imperio, ad conspectum tui, quasi ad salutem sanitatemque, prorepere. Inde alii se satis vixisse te viso, te recepto; alii nunc magis esse vivendum prædicabant. Fœminas etiam tunc fecunditatis suæ maxima voluptas subiit, quum cernerent cui principi cives, cui imperitori, milite, peperissent. *Plin. Pan.* 22.

of less importance to please, received from him the whole of what was destined for the relief of poor citizens. His manner of distributing that largess was great and noble. Instead of giving it to such only as were present, which was the usual way, he ordered, that whoever should be prevented from coming, either by business, sickness, or any other impediment, should have their respective shares of the liberality allotted them, whenever they should appear to receive it; not excepting even children and infants, though that favour, so pleasing to every parent, had not been requested of him. Pliny's reflections on this occasion are so fine, that I cannot deprive my readers of them "You resolved," says he to Trajan, "that* your subjects, even from "their infancy, should find in you a common fa- "ther, to whom they should be indebted for their "education; that, as they grew up for you, they "should grow by your means; that the support "you granted them in their tender years, should "enable them in future days to receive your pay as "your soldiers; and that every one of them in par- "ticular should owe to you, singly, as much as "each could do to the authors of their beings."

Pliny's expressions seem to indicate, not a transient momentary liberality, but a continued assistance and support during the whole course of their education; nor did Trajan, according to Dion Cassius, confine that laudable munificence to Rome only; he extended it to all Italy †.

Dio.

So

* Ut jam inde ab infantiâ te parentem publicum munere educationis experirentur: crescerent de tuo qui crescerent tibi, alimentisque tuis ad stipendia tua pervenirent, tantumque omnes uni tibi quantum parentibus suis quisque deberet.

† *An original act was found in* 1747, *at Placentia, engraved on a plate of brass, attesting this liberality of Trajan, and the funds assigned by him for the support of children of both sexes. M. D. Terrasson has inserted it in his* History of the Roman Law.

So far was he from taking back with one hand what he gave with the other, in this noble distribution of his benevolence and generosity, that he dispensed both cities and nations from making him the free gifts which it was usual for the emperors to receive on their accession to the throne. *Plin. Pan.* 41.

He thought it his duty too to make plenty reign in Rome and Italy; but at the same time without exhausting the provinces. Former emperors, it is true, always had taken care that the capital should be well provided with proper provisions; but then they often had recourse to violence and oppression to effect it. Trajan's method was mild and gentle; he took off all restrictions, and laid that necessary trade quite open; the consequence of which was, that the provinces found their account in sending their corn to Italy, and the treasury paid them punctually for it. Rome enjoyed plenty *, and no place was in want. Trajan took such measures as were judged most proper to perpetuate a thing so desirable to the people, and so necessary to the tranquillity of the state. He procures plenty in Rome by the mildness of his government. 29—32. *Vict.*

The city of Rome was so plentifully provided as to be able to relieve Egypt when distressed by famine. That rich and fertile country generally supplied the mistress of the world with most of her wants; but the waters of the Nile not rising to their usual height, a dearth ensued in Egypt. Rome, which had received yearly benefits of the like nature from thence, was happily in a condition to return the favour, through Trajan's prudence and good management. *Plin.*

Trajan's care extended equally to every calamity that happened during his reign. Rome suffered by a violent inundation of the Tiber, and by several fires, in one of which Nero's golden palace was burnt. Trajan's care to remedy several calamities. *Vict. Eutr. et Epit.*

* Inde hîc satietas, nec fames usquam.

burnt. Several provinces were afflicted with earthquakes, dearths, and epidemical distempers. The prince's goodness applied proper remedies to all. To prevent, as much as possible, the falling down of houses, when shook by earthquakes, and to lessen the expense of repairing them, he absolutely forbade building any above sixty feet high.

He clears Rome of the infamous tribe of informers. *Plin. Pan.* 94, 95.

Informers had enjoyed the fruits of their villany under Domitian; and his successor, Nerva, was of too meek and easy a temper to treat them with such severity as the heinousness of their crimes justly deserved. Trajan did what his predecessor should have done; he cleared Rome entirely of that noxious vermin, and transported them to the same desert islands where so many innocent persons had been confined through their iniquitous means.

This was not all that Trajan did to deter informers; he issued an ordinance, much more severe than either Titus's or Nerva's, against such as should be convicted of accusing others falsely. Informers, as I observed elsewhere, were an evil that arose from the very nature of the Roman laws, by which any one citizen was allowed to accuse and prosecute another in criminal cases. The public was not made a party in any cause in their courts; every man was consequently at liberty to accuse another; but Trajan took all possible care to prevent its being done unjustly and tyrannically.

His care to prevent all abuses of the revenues of the exchequer. *Plin. Pan.* 36.

The taxes accruing to the exchequer were often made a handle of to commence those odious prosecutions. Informers were glad of the specious pretence of recovering them, and increasing the revenues of the state, to satisfy their own avarice and private resentments. Trajan*, who was an enemy to all flattery, was particularly on his guard against all over-zealous pretenders to espouse his interest. He

* Ad tuas aures, quum cæteris omnibus tum maxime avario adulationibus obstructus est aditus. *Plin. Pan.* 41.

He did not indeed give up what was his just right; but he would not suffer it to be made a pretence to harass and oppress his subjects. The courts of justice were open to whosoever thought himself injured by the emperor's agents and lieutenants and the exchequer*, whose cause, says Pliny, is never bad, unless a good prince be upon the throne, was often cast whilst Trajan reigned.

The empress Plotina is said to have contributed not a little towards his having preserved an unblemished reputation in that respect. Pliny assures us, that the intendants of Trajan's appointing were so honest, that, when any dispute arose concerning the prince's dues, the parties concerned would frequently desire no other judge than themselves. But the best of princes may be deceived. It is impossible for them to attend equally to every thing that occurs; and even their lenity and indulgence will be taken advantage of by bad men, who, contrary to the sovereign's intention, will creep into places designed for virtue, and abuse the power they are intrusted with. So it happened under Trajan, some of his intendants plundering and oppressing the provinces committed to their care. Plotina informed him of it, and he immediately punished the delinquents as they deserved, and took all the care he could to prevent the like from happening again. He would often say, that the exchequer is to the state † what the spleen ‡ is to the human body; it cannot increase without wasting and impoverishing the other members. *Vict. Epit. in Julian.*

* Sæpius vincitur fiscus, cujus mala causa nunquam est, nisi sub bono principe.

† Ut fiscum lienem vocaret, quod eo crescente artus reliqui tabescent.

‡ *I do not know whether what Trajan says here of the spleen be founded on experience; but it was the general opinion of those days.*

He moderates the tax of the twentieth penny. *Plin. Pan.* 17—40.

Trajan was not afraid to diminish his own revenues by adding further restrictions to the law concerning the twentieth penny, payable out of all collateral inheritances, first established by Augustus, and lately moderated by Nerva. Trajan extended his indulgence to all who, though within a certain degree of kindred, had not yet paid that tax; by exempting them from payment of the arrears already due, and from all future payment of it, in common with others.

His frugality makes him rich. 41.

What is very remarkable, is, that after all the liberalities I have been speaking of, Trajan was rich and easy. His frugality, economy, and moderation in all things, sufficed, as Pliny particularly observes, to compensate for the diminution of his revenues, and enabled him to follow the dictates of his heart, in relieving his people, and loading them with favours.

Merit esteemed and honoured by Trajan. *Plin.* 42—44.

I need not say how little regard so good a prince paid to all malicious accusations for pretended crimes of treason. The Romans were no longer terrified by that hideous monster; nor * did they now esteem it wise and prudent to bury themselves and their talents in obscurity, as they had done before. Merit ventured to show itself again, and met with rewards and honours, instead of the dangers and disgraces to which it had been so lately subject. Trajan was pleased to find a becoming resolution and nobleness of soul in others, and always strove to encourage and promote, rather than to humble and depress it. To such it was that he gave employments, priesthoods, governments of provinces, and every other

* Salva est omnibus vitâ, et dignitas vitæ: nec jam consideratus et sapiens, qui ætatem in tenebris agit.—Amas constantiam civium, rectosque ac vividos animos non, ut alii, contundis ac deprimis, sed foves et attollis.—His honores, his sacerdotia, his provincias offers: hi amicitiâ tuâ, hi judicio florent. *Plin.* 44.

mark of esteem and friendship. He thought,* and justly too, that as nothing is more different than absolute despotism and the lawful power of an emperor, so none are more sincerely inclined to love their prince, than those who are least disposed to brook slavery.

His heart was consequently free from distrusts, jealousies, and fears. His own virtues warranted the fidelity of those whose duty it was to obey him. He gave a high proof of his noble confidence in that respect, when, putting Saburanus in possession of the office of pretorian prefect, he gave him the sword that was his badge of dignity, with these words: † "Receive this sword, and use it, to de-"fend me if I govern well, but against me if I be-"have ill." A noble speech, and well becoming Trajan! At the same time, it is a further confirmation of the idea we have before endeavoured to give of the Roman government under the emperors, that the constitution of the state was in fact still republican, and the imperial dignity no more than a magistracy accountable to the republic.

Noble speech of Trajan to his pretorian prefect. *Plin.* 67. *Dio. Vict.*

Domitian's tyranny was an excellent lesson to Trajan, and contributed not a little to give him that share of moderation and benevolence with which he was so happily endowed. "You lived ‡ among "us," says his panegyrist to him, "and was exposed "to fears and dangers: such was then the common "fate of good men. You know, and have expe-"rienced, how much bad princes are disposed to

His sentiments when but a private man, were the rule of his conduct when emperor. *Plin.* 44.

4 "hate

* Scis, ut sunt diversa naturâ dominatio et principatus ita non aliis esse principem gratiorem, quam qui maxime dominum graventur. *Plin.* 45.

† Tibi istum ad munimentum mei committo, si recte agam; sin aliter, in me magis. *Vict.*

‡ Vixisti nobiscum, periclitatus es, timuisti: quæ tunc erat innocentium vita. Scis, et expertus es, quanto opere detestentur malos principes, etiam qui malos faciunt. Meministi quæ optare nobiscum, quæ sis queri solitus. Nam privato judicio principem geris. *Plin.*

" hate the very men that make them bad. You re-
" member the wishes you used then to make, and
" the complaints you uttered in concert with us.
" The sentiments which you had when but a pri-
" vate man, are the rule of your conduct now that
" you are emperor."

Pliny does but repeat what Trajan himself said, when, being taxed with behaving too familiarly toward his subjects, and not preserving the dignity of his rank, he replied, "* Such as I would have had " the emperor be when I was but a subject, such " I am determined to be to my subjects now that " I am emperor." In effect, imitating the example of Augustus, he visited his friends whether they were well or ill; if any of them were celebrating a domestic festival, or rejoicing at home, he would sit down among the guests, and do as they did. It was common for him to take a seat in one of their equipages. The truth is, his real merit was so great, that there was no occasion for show and pomp to set it off, and he was conscious of it.

He had friends, because he knew the value of friendship. His confidence in Sura. *Plin. 85. Dio. ap. Val. Vict. Epit.*

He † had friends, because he was himself a friend to others in the strictest sense, and reposed an entire confidence in them. Some endeavoured to make him suspect Licinius Sura, who, in reality, was strongly attached to him, and even seems to have been instrumental in making Nerva adopt him. Trajan went to sup with Sura, sent away his guards as soon as he was in the house, desired Sura's surgeon might be called to do something to his eyes, and sent for his barber to shave him, after which he bathed and supped; and the next day, meeting some of those who had endeavoured to prejudice him against that senator, " If Sura," said he to them, " had designed to kill me, he would have " done it yesterday."

By

* Talem se imperatorem esse privatis, quales esse sibi imperatores privatus optâsset. *Eutrop.*

† Habes amicos, quia amicus ipse es. *Plin.*

By such behaviour it was that Trajan gained the hearts of all. He was * sensible that love is not to be commanded, nor obtained but by love. "A "prince," says Pliny, "may be hated by some, "though he himself does not hate any; but, unless "he loves, he never can be loved." Far from thinking that friendship could debase him, Trajan knew nothing so mean and unworthy of a sovereign as to hate. To love and to be loved was his wish.

History reckons among his chief friends Sura, of whom I have just been speaking, Sossius Senecio, to whom Plutarch addresses several of his moral essays, Cornelius Palma, and Celsus. Trajan had statues erected to them all, and honoured the memory of Sura, who died before him, with a magnificent funeral, and a monument consecrated to his name. He likewise built baths, which he called *Sura's baths.* *Dio.* *Victor. Epit.*

He loved his friends for their sakes, not his own; requiring no service from them, and leaving them entirely at liberty either to remain with him, or retire from court, if they preferred repose. Pliny gives us a remarkable instance of this: One whom Trajan had made prefect of the pretorians, without his asking for or even desiring that post, soon grew tired of it, and desired leave to resign, to spend the remainder of his days in the country. The emperor would have been glad to keep him, but would lay no command on him to stay. He yielded to his entreaties, without ceasing to love him; bore him company to the sea-side; embraced him tenderly when they parted, and invited him strongly to return again. His friendship was disinterested. *Plin.* 86, 87.

His

* Neque enim, ut alia subjectis, ita amor imperatur. Potest fortasse princeps inique, potest tamen odio esse nonnullis, etiam si ipse non oderit; amari, nisi ipse amet, non potest. Placeat tibi semper hæc secta, nec unquam persuadeatur humile esse principi, nisi odisse. *Plin.*

He was easy of access. His goodness was not confined to his friends only; it appeared even in his audiences, to which he
97—99. admitted all without distinction. No temple or public building was more open and easy of access than Trajan's palace. Nerva caused the words, PUBLIC PALACE, to be written over the front of the imperial palace, and Trajan made it such in fact: the prince's dwellings seemed the abode of all the citizens of Rome: no door was locked, or refused to any by the guards, but all was hushed and modest as in a private house. Trajan was affable to all, received them well, and heard what they had to say, as cordially and as attentively as if they had been talking to him about his own affairs. Every one was at liberty to pay their court to him, or not pay it, as they pleased. Living in the manner he did amidst his subjects, like a father amidst his children, the love of his people was a much stronger safeguard to him than Domitian's doubled guards, terrors, and cruelties. Yes, says Pliny, experience * shows us, that the best safeguard a prince can have, is to be good and virtuous. No fortress, no rampart, is so good a defence as his not standing in need of either rampart or fortress; if the love of his people do not guard him, bands of soldiers will attempt in vain to do it. Arms irritate, and provoke to arms.

Free from pride at his table. Trajan had a true relish for the sweets of society, and took care they should embellish all his repasts. Some of the first and best men of Rome were always at his table, where freedom and liberty reigned throughout. The emperor would often start questions, and answer others. It was not the curious workmanship of the gold or silver plate, the variety of

* Discimus experimento fidelissimam esse custodiam principis ipsius innocentiam. Hæc arx inaccessa, hoc inexpugnabile munimentum munimento non egere. Frustra se terrore succinxerit, qui septus caritate non fuerit: armis enim arma irritantur.

of dishes, the excellence of a ragout, or the elegance of a desert, that were the general topic of conversation; but a pleasing ease and gaiety prevailed in all, whether a point of literature, or any other agreeably interesting matter was the subject in debate; so that Trajan's table was in fact calculated to unbend and recreate the minds both of the emperor and his guests.

In general Trajan was plain in all he did; even his diversions bore an air of simplicity. He loved hunting, and often indulged himself in that exercise, but without the least tincture of show or effeminacy; frequently dislodging the beast himself, and pursuing it over hill and vale. If at any time he sailed upon the sea for his amusement, he took particular notice of the working of the ship, lent a hand himself, and made no scruple of taking up an oar, and rowing, if the wind or waves chanced to be stronger than usual. I cannot forbear inserting what strikes me most in Pliny's reflections. Speaking of the nature of Trajan's amusements,* "There are," says he, "pleasures by which one may judge of "the morals and integrity of the person that de- "lights in them. Lives there a man whose occu- "pations do not wear at least an outside show of "seriousness? It is the want of occupation that be- "trays us. Hunting is a manly, and indeed a mi- "litary exercise, becoming a prince, whose † recrea- "tions are but a change of labour. Not ‡ that to "harden the body, and render it strong and ro- "bust

Trajan fond of hunting. 81—82.

* Sunt voluptates quibus optime de cujusque gravitate, sanctitate, temperantia creditur. Nam quis a deo dissolutus, cujus non occupationibus aliqua species severitatis insideat? Otio prodimur. *Plin.* 82.

† Instar refectionis existimas mutationem laboris. 81.

‡ Nec vero laudaverim per se magnopere duritiam corporis et lacertorum. Sed si his validior toto corpore animus imperitet, quem non fortunæ indulgentia molliat, non copiæ principales ad segnitiem luxumque detorqueant, tunc ego . . lætum opere corpus, et crescentia laboribus membra mirabor. 82.

" bust by exercise, is in itself a thing of infinite
" estimation; but if that body, full of vigour, be
" animated by a soul still more vigorous; and if
" such fortitude of mind, as is able to resist all the
" attacks of fortune and of pleasure, be added to
" a proportionable strength of body; then it is
" that I will praise an exercise in which fatigue is
" pleasing, and renders us more vigorous."

Effects of the prince's moral example. *Plin.* 83, 84.

Trajan's virtuous example could not but influence his whole family. His wife and sister imitated his modesty, and lived together in such harmony and union, as made him as happy at home as he was great abroad. At least Pliny would have us think so, though he seems to say rather too much on this occasion. For Plotina's protecting Adrian so strongly as she did, and her persisting in it contrary to Trajan's inclination, together with the part she acted in order to raise him to the empire, seem not to speak her over studious to please her husband.

83, 1.

But there can be no reason to doubt Pliny when he tells us, that the whole body of the people profited by Trajan's example, and grew better, and that vice became really unfashionable under that virtuous prince. " So strongly," says he, " does * the
" sovereign's example influence the subject, we are
" ready to receive whatever impression he pleases
" to give us, and to follow him wherever he goes;
" for his approbation and esteem are what we aim
" at, and what such as are not like him can never
" hope to obtain. Add to this the powerful mo-
" tive of rewards, which, according as they are
" given to virtue or to vice, † make men good or
" bad. Few men have sufficient elevation of soul
" to

* Flexibiles quamcunque in partem ducimur a principe, atque, ut ita dicam, sequaces sumus. Huic enim cari, huic probati esse cupimus; quod frustra speraverunt dissimiles. 45.

† Præmia bonorum; malorumque bonos ac malos faciunt. Pauci adeo ingenio valent, ut non turpe honestumque, prout bene

" to be good merely for the sake of being good, " and to resist a temptation, when thrown in the " way, in favour of vice against virtue. The case " is, that the far greater part of mankind, seeing " how that which ought to be the reward of in- " dustry and labour is given to idleness and sloth, " and the mad frolics of debauchery preferred to " wisdom and prudence, think they cannot do bet- " ter than follow the steps of those who do suc- " ceed, and copy the vices for which they are ho- " noured. On the other hand, if virtue be the price " of the prince's favour, and of the rewards that " are the consequences of it, she will soon resume " her empire over the hearts of all, and shine with " inimitable splendour."

The very multitude was awed and bettered by Trajan's virtuous example. It is well known how fond the people were of pantomimic entertainments. Domitian suppressed them, and banished the actors, whom Nerva was obliged to recal and suffer to play again. The people voluntarily requested Trajan to abolish those seducing entertainments, which served only to promote debauchery and vice; so that he had the honour of reforming a pernicious abuse, at the desire of those who, till then, had constantly protected and encouraged it; and, instead of making use of that blind guide fear, * to direct them right, he left every one to the pleasing consciousness of having done his duty of his own accord.

The people desire the expulsion of the pantomimes. 45.

The example of the capital soon reached the provinces, and had a happy influence on them. The chief magistrate of Vienne in Gaul, Trebonius Rufinus, forbade the performance of certain gymnastic games

Gymnastic games suppressed at Vienne. *Plin. ep.* 22.

bene aut secus cessit, expetant fugiantve. Cæteri, ubi laboris inertiæ, vigilantiæ somno, frugalitatis luxuriæ merces datur, eadem ista, quibus alios artibus assecutos vident, consectantur. 44.

* Infidelis recti magister est metus. 45.

games founded by the will of a citizen of that place. A suit arose, and was brought before Trajan, who judged it, assisted by a chosen council, of which Pliny was one. Trebonius pleaded his own cause, and was seconded by Junius Mauricus, who, when it came to his turn to vote, "Would to the gods," said he, "that I could also suppress those combats in Rome!" His opinion prevailed, and the gymnastic combats at Vienne were suppressed.

Trajan protects the arts and sciences. *Plin. Pan.* 47. *Vict. Epit.*

Trajan, though not a man of learning himself, had a great esteem for the liberal arts, and those who professed them. His inclination led him more to arms than study; but at the same time he was thoroughly sensible of the value of those branches of knowledge which it had not fallen in his way to acquire. He liked them, and was pleased when he heard others talk of them; and, that they might be the more effectually propagated and spread, he established libraries, and * revived the drooping arts and sciences persecuted by Domitian. It well became him to encourage the study of wisdom, and every art that tends to make human nature more perfect, when his whole life was a practical series of the lessons they inculcate.

Dio.

His moderation with respect to the possessions of private men.

Pliny gives us several other instances of the excellence of Trajan's government, some of which I shall copy in the order he places them. "† You "make us," says he, addressing himself to the prince, "partakers of your riches, your palace, "and your table; and at the same time will have "us enjoy the property of what is our own. You "do

* Ut sub te spiritum et sanguinem et patriam receperunt studia, quæ priorum temporum immanitas exsiliis puniebat. At tu easdem artes in complexu, oculis, auribus, habes. Præstas enim quæcumque præcipiunt; tantumque illas diligis, quantum ab illis probaris. 47.

† Quum rebus tuis ut participes fruamur, quæ habemus ipsi quam propria, quam nostra sunt! Est quod Cæsar non suum videat, tandemque imperium principi, quam patrimonium, majus est. 50.

"do not invade the possessions of individuals, as "many of your predecessors have done. Cæsar can "see things not his own, and suffer the state to "be greater than his demesnes."

He sells or gives away several of the imperial palaces.

Trajan did more. Finding how great a number he had of palaces, country-seats, and fine gardens, greedily usurped by the first Cæsars, and what expence it required to maintain them, he put some of them up to sale, and gave away others, thinking * nothing more his own than what his friends had.

Instead of building for himself, he reserves his magnificence for public offices.

From his parting with so many palaces and other buildings which belonged to him as emperor, merely out of a spirit of modesty and liberality, we may readily conclude he was not over-fond of building new ones for his own use. It is true he was magnificent, but it was in buildings for the public. Pliny speaks of porticoes and temples, some built, others finished by him, and of a great addition to the circus, in which he would have no particular seat for himself distinguished from those of the citizens in general.

He did still greater things in the sequel of his reign. The most famous was the new square which he built in Rome, and called after his own name. A hill, an hundred and twenty-eight feet high, was levelled for that purpose, and fine houses and galleries built round the square, in the middle of which stood the famous pillar called by his name, destined to be his sepulchral monument, the height whereof is equal, as an inscription † on it says, to the height of the ground that was dug away to make the square. It was this square and pillar that the emperor Constantius admired so prodigiously when he came to Rome, and despaired of being able ever to equal them in any respect.

Plin.

Amm. Marc. L. XVI.

Trajan

* Nihil magis tuum credis, quam quod per amicos habes.

† Ad declarandum quantæ altitudinis mons et locus tantis operibus sit egestus.

Vict. Trajan did not forget the provinces whilst he embellished Rome. He settled several colonies in them; made a high-road the whole length of the empire from east to west, through the midst of barbarous nations, from the Euxine sea to Gaul; fortified camps and castles on the frontiers, and wherever else there was occasion for them. In Spain, where he was born, a bridge of excellent workmanship over the Tagus at Alcantara, and several high-roads, which so many ages as have since passed have not been able to destroy entirely, are, to this day, standing monuments of his magnificence. I shall speak elsewhere of the harbour he made at Civita Vecchia, and of his bridge over the Danube.

Cincon. de Col. Traj.

Plain and strong demonstrations of the public regard and veneration for Trajan. *Plin. 52—55.*

A prince, who made the happiness of mankind so much his care as Trajan did, could not but be the darling and delight of all. Nothing could be more sincere than the plain and honest demonstrations of public gratitude and sensibility. No divine honours were decreed him, nor did his statues crowd the city; but few of them were seen, and these of no better metal than those of the Bruti and Camilli, of whose virtues he was himself so lively a representation. The senate did not resound, right or wrong, with his praise. The senators did not think themselves obliged, nor indeed were they, to offer up the incense of adulation to their sovereign on all occasions. When the subject required it, they praised him, unanimously said what they really thought, and what their hearts dictated, without flattery or exaggeration. Their sincerity apologized sufficiently for the want of compliment.

He prefers them to all extraordinary honours.

They suited themselves in that to Trajan's real disposition; for he was quite averse to all extraordinary honours and titles. * "You know," says Pliny,

* Scis ubi vera principis, ubi sempiterna sit gloria, ubi sint honores in quos nihil flammis, nihil senectuti, nihil successoribus liceat. Arcus enim et statuas, aras etiam templaque demolitur

"Pliny to him, wherein consists the true and immortal glory of a monarch; a glory which neither fire, nor age, nor the malignant jealousy of successors, can eclipse. Triumphal arches, statues, altars, and temples, perish in time, and are forgot; posterity neglects them, or, too often, tries only to find fault with them. But a great and noble soul, a soul above ambition, one that knows how to curb in and prescribe bounds to the haughty pride of unlimited power, cannot fail to secure honours, which time, far from effacing, will add fresh lustre to from age to age; and those who are least under a necessity of doing it, will always be most forward to commend the prince who is guided by such rules. Add to this, that sovereigns are sure their characters, whether good or bad, will be transmitted to posterity, and remembered whilst history subsists. What they ought, therefore, to wish for is, not that their memories may live for ever, but that they may be honoured and revered. This is to be obtained by merit and virtue, not by images and statues."

Trajan never suffered temples to be erected to him in his lifetime. As to trophies, triumphal arches, and such sort of things, he did not oppose them when he thought them his due. On the contrary, he has been taxed with having multiplied them too much, which gave rise to the saying, that he was like pellitory—ready to stick to every wall. *Amm. Mar. L. XXVII.*

molitur et obscurat oblivio, negligit carpitque posteritas. Contra contemptor ambitionis, et infinitæ potestatis domitor ac frenator animus ipsâ vetustate florescit, nec ab ullis magis laudatur, quàm quibus minimè necesse est. Præterea ut quisque factus est princeps, extemplo fama ejus, incertum bona an mala, cæterum æterna est. Non ergo perpetua principi fama, quæ invitum manet, sed bona, concupiscenda est. Ea porrò non imaginibus et statuis, sed virtute ac meritis propagatur. 55.

His high rank, and great success in war, may possibly in time have made some alteration in his first noble way of thinking; but I see nothing in the beginning of his reign to hinder our thinking, with Pliny, that the demonstrations which the public gave of their esteem and veneration for his virtues were, not only in truth, but in his opinion too, greatly superior to the proudest monuments.

The surname of *Best* given him. *Plin.* 2. et 81.

The Romans gave him the surname of OPTIMUS, *Best*;* a name quite new, and uninvaded by the pride and arrogance of preceding emperors. Though glad of heaping upon themselves pompous and high-sounding titles, this, the noblest that can be given to mortal man, escaped them, and was reserved for Trajan; who, on his side, was sensible of the value of it, and, by a continued series of good conduct during his whole reign, deserved it so well as to make it in a great measure proper to himself. It became his special attribute, and distinguishing characteristic; and in later times, the highest compliment that could be paid a new prince was, to wish him happier than Augustus, and better than Trajan: FELICIOR AUGUSTO, MELIOR TRAJANO.

Eutr. p.

Tillem. note 6. on Trajan.

In all probability, this title did not pass at once into general use, but was first given to Trajan by the voice of the people, afterwards spread, and by degrees crept into public acts and monuments. We find it on few medals prior to the latter end of his reign.

Acclamations of the senate and people, full of tenderness and affection, and well deserved by a thou-

Besides that lasting title, the fruit of the senate and people's love for Trajan, their affection often overflowed, and broke out suddenly in such tender and pleasing acclamations, as filled the good prince with joy, and crowned him with glory. His subjects were frequently heard to exclaim in his presence,

* Quod peculiare hujus et proprium arrogantia priorum principum fecit. 2.

sence, "Happy citizens! Happy emperor! Long "may he lead this great and virtuous life! Long "may he hear our ardent wishes for him!" At* which tender expressions Trajan blushed, and shed tears of joy; for he was sensible it was to himself, and not to his fortune, that they were meant.

sandinstances of wisdom and goodness. *Plin. Pan.* 2.

His third consulship, in particular, entitled him eminently to those joyful acclamations so pleasing to a good prince. The manner in which he accepted that high post, discharged the functions of it, and afterwards laid it down, filled the Romans with admiration, and infinite attachment to him.

When he consented to be made consul a third time, he imitated Nerva's modesty, in bestowing the same honour upon two private men, each of whom he likewise promoted to a third consulship. He made them both his colleagues, his own consulship being for four months, and each of theirs for two. One of these was Frontinus, or more probably Fronto, of whom we have spoken in Nerva's reign; the other is quite unknown to us. But what we do know is, that Trajan chose them both in consequence of the high esteem and consideration they had justly acquired, both from the senate and the people. They were of the number of those whom the senate appointed commissioners under Nerva, to consider of ways and means to lessen the expenses of the state. Trajan thought it his duty to honour those the senate honoured, and to distinguish them according to the respective ranks in which that assembly placed them.

Tillem. n. 8. *on Trajan. Plin.*

Pliny very justly takes an opportunity from thence to praise his prince, and† exhort him still to continue in the same road. "Judge of us," says he to him, "by the voice of public fame; fix your

* Ad quas ille voces lacrymis ac multo pudore suffunditur. Agnoscit enim sentitque sibi, non principi, dici. 2.

† Persta, Cæsar, in ista ratione propositi, talesque nos crede,

" eye on her, and lend her your ear. Listen not " to private scandal, the propagators of which lay " dangerous snares for none more than such as give " ear to them. It is safer to depend on the testi- " mony of all than on that of any one. One may " deceive, or be deceived, in private and myste- " rious conferences; but no one person ever impo- " sed upon all; nor has any one been deceived by " the united testimonies of all."

Trajan having resolved to accept the consulship, thought it incumbent on him to go through the whole ceremonial then observed by candidates. The people had still some share in the election of magistrates, or at least a show of it. The emperor repaired to the *Campus Martius* with the other candidates, and there waited patiently with them till he was chosen.

To this great instance of moderation Trajan immediately after added another, still more remarkable. The moment he was elected, he presented himself before the consul who presided at the assembly, in order to take the same oaths that private men used to do on the like occasion. He stood before the consul, who, being seated, dictated to him the oath he was to take, and the emperor repeated it word for word. Consistent with himself in all he did, that very day, or the next, when he took possession of the consulship, he ascended the tribunal for harangues, and there swore to observe the laws. He did the same when he laid down his office; again appearing on the tribunal, so long disdained by his predecessors, and making oath that he had done nothing contrary to the laws.

I

de, qualis fama cujusque est: huic aures, huic oculos intende. Ne respexeris clandestinas existimationes, nullisque magis quàm audientibus insidiantes susurros. Meliùs omnibus quàm singulis creditur. Singuli enim decipere et decipi possunt. Nemo omnes, neminem omnes fefellerunt. 62.

I do not know that any emperor, either before or after Trajan, ever went through the whole of this ceremonial. From what he did, it plainly appears, as I before observed, that he looked upon the republic as subsisting, and considered himself, not as master, but only head and chief magistrate of it; and that he was satisfied the plenitude of power did not reside in him, but in the body of the state.

We have a farther confirmation of this in the expressions he makes use of in his speech to the senate on the first of January. He exhorts them to reassume their liberty; to take care of the empire, as of a common good; and to watch over the public welfare. It was common enough, indeed, for the emperors to talk in that style; but in Trajan it was thought sincere.

What was not at all common, nor even practised before, was the form of the vows he would have the republic make for him on the third of January, in consequence of a custom instituted by Augustus; for he himself added to those vows for his prosperity and preservation this express clause: "* *Provided he governs well, and manages the affairs of the republic for the advantage of all.*" This was making himself popular indeed, and, at the same time, expressing a high trust and confidence in himself, not to desire to live longer than he should be of service to the republic; nor to suffer a vow to be made but what had for its object the welfare and advantage of every one that made it. A. R. 851.

The time came on for electing inferior magistrates, such as pretors, ediles, quæstors, &c. for so I think we are to understand Pliny's general expressions, doubtless quite clear and intelligible at the time he wrote, though less so now. Those magistrates were chosen by plurality of votes in the

* *Si bene rempublicam, et ex utilitate omnium, rexerit.* 67. et 68.

senate, where Trajan presided as consul. An election at which the emperor was present in that quality could not but depend chiefly, and indeed wholly, upon his pleasure; but Trajan immediately told the candidates, that they were to expect no farther assistance from their prince, towards obtaining the honours they desired, than they should meet with the approbation of the senate; for which august body he strongly recommended to them to have the same respect and deference as he himself had.

Nobility of birth had great weight with him in the preference he gave one candidate before another. Wherever he found any descendants of those ancient families which the Cæsars had been so long endeavouring to extirpate, he gave them all the encouragement he could, took a pleasure in raising them, and, from a most laudable principle of disinterestedness, honoured and respected in them an advantage which he had not. He likewise paid great regard to past services: the strongest recommendation a man could have to obtain a higher post from him was, to have behaved well in a lower. He weighed what was said by men of honour and probity in favour of such as were candidates for any offices, and tried all means to discover merit, and to reward it; and all this without exerting the authority of emperor; acting more like a simple senator, and influencing by his example more than by his power. Those who had the good fortune to be elected with so much honour, thought themselves happy without doubt, and were thoroughly satisfied; but Trajan had the art of discontenting none, not even those who miscarried in their suits. *The former were rejoiced by success, the latter comforted by hope.

This

* Alii cum lætitia, alii cum spe recesserunt. Multis gratulandum, nemo consolandus fuit. 69.

This was not all. The moment any candidate was returned elected for the post he desired, Trajan congratulated him with all the kindness and familiarity of a friend. He descended from his curule chair, met and embraced him; insomuch that the emperor and the candidate were for a while upon a par: and the senate, who had been witnesses to Domitian's scornful pride, scarcely vouchsafing to hold his hand out to be kissed by the first men in the state, saw with extasy the wide inequality betwixt him that gives and him that receives an office, banished and removed. * The senators could not contain themselves for joy, but cried out from every corner of the house, *This makes you still greater, still more august.* And so indeed it did: for, as Pliny says, "He who has attained the pinnacle of great-" ness, can grow greater only by condescending to " stoop down. The majesty of his rank is still se-" cure. No danger needs less to be feared by any " sovereign, than what arises from condescension " and humility."

Trajan was so little apprehensive of any such danger, that he made no difficulty of naming himself last in the prayer † he offered up, according to custom, at the opening of the assembly for elections. "I " beseech the gods, said he, that the several choices " now going to be made, may prove beneficial to " you, the republic, and myself." Adding to the vows, with which that ceremony was closed, these words, not less remarkable for their modesty, than for the strong idea they convey of his just confidence

* Quod factum tuum à cuncto senatu quàm verâ acclamatione celebratum est! *Tanto major! tanto augustior!* Nam cui nihil ad augendum fastigium superest, hic uno modo crescere potest, si se ipse submittat: securus magnitudinis suæ. Neque enim ab ullo periculo fortuna principum longius abest, quàm humilitatis. 71.

† Precatus es, ut illa ipsa ordinatio comitiorum *bene ac feliciter eveniret nobis, Reipublicæ, tibi.* 72.

in his own virtue: "* May the gods so far hear "and grant my request, as I shall continue to merit "your esteem."

The senate answered these kind wishes with acclamations of joy and tenderness †. "Happy prince! "cried they; doubt not your being for ever loved "by us. Believe us when we say it: believe your "own virtues when they tell you so. How great "is our happiness! May the gods love us; may "they love our prince as much as our prince "loves us!"

These kind of acclamations had long been used, as I have elsewhere observed; but, in general, they were only empty words, extorted by the circumstances of things, and no way flowing from the heart: accordingly, no care was taken to record them; they died instantly. Those with which the most sincere affection of his subjects honoured Trajan, deserved to be treated with more respect. The senate, after obtaining the prince's leave with great difficulty, ordered them to be inscribed on plates of brass, to be a standing monument and motive of emulation for succeeding emperors, and a lesson to teach them to distinguish between the language of the heart and flattery.

Vol. III.

Trajan was still the same in his discharge of every other part of the functions of consul, none of which he thought beneath him, but fulfilled them all with as much care and attention as if he had been nothing more than consul. He presided in all deliberations of the senate; was regularly at his tribunal, where he administered justice to all that came; never interfered in what was the business of another magistrate, but let every one enjoy his full rights and prerogatives.

* *Ut ita precibus tuis Dii annuerent, si judicium nostrum mereri perseverasses.* Ibid.

† *O te felicem! ——————Crede nobis, crede tibi,——————* Precati sumus, *ut sic te amarent Dii, quemadmodum tu nos;—ut nos sic amarent Dii, quomodo tu.——O nos felices!* 74.

tives. The pretors had always been treated as colleagues of the consuls. Trajan, whilst consul, called them his colleagues, laying aside entirely the dignity of emperor, which raised him so far above them.

The affair of Marius Priscus, which came on in the month of January, proved Trajan's care and patience in the discharge of the functions of consul. Priscus, being proconsul of Africa, had plundered that province. He owned the fact, and readily submitted to the penalty of the law, which was, to restore what he had unjustly taken. But that was not his only crime. Avarice had made him cruel; he had taken money to condemn the innocent. This last offence was so atrocious, that complaint was made against him to the senate. Pliny and Tacitus pleaded for the Africans. The trial lasted three days, and each sitting held till night. Trajan was present all the while, and never once complained of the length of time, nor interposed his authority in the least to influence the judgment of any one, or prevent a full examination. His care and regard for Pliny were remarkable on this occasion. *Pliny* having been obliged to speak five hours together with great warmth, the emperor, fearing lest such fatigue might hurt so tender a constitution as his was, sent several times to him, during the course of the pleadings, to desire he would take care of himself. The result was, that Priscus was banished; the severest punishment the Roman laws inflicted. He saved, however, part of his ill-got riches*, and took it with him to his place of exile. There, as the satirist expresses it, *he enjoyed the heavens incensed against him*, living jovially, and spending away; while the province, in whose favour the cause was judged,

The affair of Marius Priscus. *Plin. ep. II. 11. and Pan. 76.*

* ——————— Damnatus inani
Judicio, (quid enim salvis infamia nummis?)
Exul ab octava Marius bibit, et fruitur Diis
Iratis: at tu victrix Provincia ploras.

Juven. Sat. I.

judged, received neither recompence nor consolation.

The affair of Classicus. *Plin. ep. l. l. 9.*

Another affair of the same nature, in which Pliny was again employed to right a province injured by the proconsul, happened about this time. Cæcilius Classicus, by birth an African, had treated Bœtica just as Marius Priscus, who was born in Bœtica, had treated the Africans. Pliny, who had been concerned for that province before against Bæbius Massa, thought he could not well refuse his assistance again when requested. Classicus died, or killed himself, before his trial could be ended; so that all Pliny could do, was to obtain a forfeiture of part of his estate in favour of the injured Bœticans. His next step was to attack the proconsul's confederates and associates in iniquity. They were numerous, and alleged, in their defence, the necessity they were under of obeying the Roman magistrate who governed them. Their plea was deemed insufficient, and they were sentenced to penalties proportioned to the nature and degree of their several offences. Classicus's wife and daughter were likewise accused by the province, as accomplices with him. The suspicions against the wife were strong, but as nothing could be proved, she was acquitted. As to the daughter, Pliny himself, thinking her innocent, declared he would not molest her, nor be concerned in any unjust prosecution of her.

It was by the special appointment of the senate that he was concerned against Priscus and Classicus; and the sentences pronounced against them are full of encomiums on the zeal, abilities, and integrity of the senate's advocate.

Pliny's consulship and panegyric. *Plin. Pan.* —93.

Pliny was consul the very year in which he pleaded these two great causes. He held the consulship during the months of September and October, and had for colleague Tertullus Cornutus, whom he often speaks of in his letters, his old friend, partner of the dangers he was exposed to from Domitian's tyranny,

tyranny, and likewise his associate in the office of keeper or intendant of the public treasury. It was a great satisfaction to them both to be again united in the exercise of the highest magistracy of Rome. Each thought himself particularly obliged for the choice made both of himself and his colleague; and Trajan crowned the whole, by bestowing on them both the praises they deserved.

It was during his consulship that Pliny pronounced that famous panegyric, out of which I have taken almost all I have hitherto said of Trajan. Though it be an encomium only, and not an historical monument, I thought I might venture boldly to make use of it, especially as the account which history gives us of that emperor agrees pretty nearly with what Pliny says.

Largius Macædo, an ancient pretor, murdered by his slaves. *Plin. ep.* III. 14.

By the arrangement of Pliny's letters, one would be apt to think it was about this time that one of the ancient pretors was barbarously murdered by his own slaves. His name was Largius Macædo. He was the son of a freeman, but a hard and merciless master, who, far from considering, * when he saw his slaves, what his father had once been, and using them somewhat the more gently on that account, seemed, on the contrary, disposed to treat them with the more barbarity. They resolved to be revenged; and, accordingly, several of them joining attacked him as he was bathing, gave him several blows, and left him for dead on the floor. Life was, however, not quite extinct in him; and some other slaves, more faithful and affectionate, coming to his assistance, and giving him proper help, he recovered so far as to live to see his assassins receive their deserts. There seems to have been no thought of putting in execution, on this occasion, that dreadful law by which every slave, living under the same roof

* Superbus dominus et sævus, et qui servisse patrem suum parum, imo nimiùm meminisset. *Plin.*

roof where the master was killed, was doomed to die; and, indeed, it would have been excessively unjust, especially in the case of Macædo.

Beginning of Adrian's elevation, by his marriage with Sabina, Trajan's grand-niece.

Trajan's third consulship was the era of the first rise of Adrian, who was afterwards emperor. It was at that time that he married Julia Sabina, the emperor's grand-niece and next heiress.

Spart. Adr. 1—4.

Several ties united him to Trajan before that. He was born in Rome, but his family came originally from Italica, the prince's native country. His grandfather, Marcellinus, was the first senator of his family; his father, Ælius Adrianus Afer, never rose higher than the post of pretor. Afer was cousin-german to Trajan, whom he named by his will guardian to his son, then ten years old, together with Cælius Tatianus, a Roman knight. At the time when Trajan was adopted by Nerva, Adrian served as tribune in the army in Lower Mœsia, and was deputed by that army to congratulate his cousin and guardian on his adoption and future prospect of the empire. He arrived, had a post given him in the army on the Rhine by the new Cæsar; and when Nerva died, was the first that carried Trajan, then in Lower Germany, the news of his death, and the first that saluted him emperor. It was not without difficulty that he gained that advantage, but his activity got the better of all obstacles. His brother-in-law, Servanus, who had the same views, traversed and delayed his journey, and managed so that his chaise broke down in the middle of the road. Adrian continued his journey on foot, and arrived before his brother-in-law's messenger.

This extraordinary zeal in Adrian shows what his views were even then; nor were they badly founded, Trajan having no child. But his expensive way of life, and the debts he contracted, prejudiced Trajan against him, though, indeed, he had no great inclination to love him on any account, doubtless because he saw, amidst all his good qualities, the seeds

seeds of vices ready to spring up and prove dangerous. What was laudable in Adrian was no great recommendation of him to Trajan. Adrian was born with a strong turn to study and learning, every branch of which he had some knowledge of. He was eloquent both in Greek and Latin, and a proficient in the study of philosophy and the law. Trajan, who was himself a man of no learning, saw no great merit in Adrian's qualifications in that respect. Adrian's taste for the arts and sciences naturally disposed him to love peace; and it plainly appeared by his conduct during his whole reign, that he was more anxious how to govern well, than how to extend the boundaries of the empire. Trajan was fond of war; trophies and victories were his supreme delight. But, above all, Adrian's capricious levity of mind, his envious and suspicious temper, the jealousy with which he saw merit in another, could not but be very disagreeable to a man of Trajan's magnanimity and openness of soul. Adrian was too quick-sighted not to perceive that the emperor was displeased at him; whereupon he applied to the empress Plotina, who had a great ascendant over her husband Trajan, paid his court to her, and gained her friendship to that degree, that many would have it she sacrificed her virtue to him. Dion Cassius is positive she did. However that may be, it certainly was Plotina who, with the help of Licinius Sura, made Trajan, almost whether he would or not, give his grand-niece Sabina in marriage to Adrian. Sabina was the daughter of Matidia, who was the daughter of Marciana, Trajan's sister. Spart.

The senate was so well pleased with Trajan's behaviour in his third consulship, that it was unanimously agreed to press him to accept a fourth consulship. The prince yielded to their entreaties, and had for colleague Articuleius Pætus. Trajan's fourth consulship. A. D. 92. *Plin. Pan.* 79.

He appointed Adrian his quæstor this year. The office of emperor's quæstor was to speak for the prince, Adrian appointed the

emperor's quæstor. *Spart.*

prince, and read his speeches to the senate. Adrian was laughed at for his provincial accent and rustic pronunciation. At the age of fifteen, being desirous to see his family and country, he went to Spain, where he staid several years, and contracted the country way of speech. Besides, he had not at that time applied himself much either to Greek or Latin erudition. The mortification he met with in his first attempt to act as quæstor, made him sensible of the necessity of studying Latin eloquence; he did so, and succeeded so well that he became the greatest orator of his time.

At the expiration of his quæstorship he was appointed to digest the senate's deliberations; but soon left that employment to follow Trajan to the war against the Dacians.

War with the Dacians. *Dio.*

The reader may remember how that nation, with their king Decebalus at their head, made Domitian tremble, and think himself happy that he could purchase peace at the expense of a tribute; though, as vain as he was cowardly, he made at the same time a show of triumphing over those who in fact had just prescribed laws to him. The Dacians, on their side, proud of the advantage they had gained, increased their forces, and insulted the Romans. Both Trajan and Decebalus seem to have contributed towards the rupture of the treaty between them, and to have been equally disposed to infringe it: the one because he thought it unbecoming the majesty of empire to pay a tribute, and the other by laying too great a stress upon it.

All we know of Trajan's exploits in this war, is what may be collected from the bad abridgments we have of Dion Cassius. We can only say that he gained a signal victory at the beginning of the campaign, and destroyed the enemy's army at the expense of great losses on both sides. Numbers of Romans were killed, and many more wounded. Trajan behaved on that occasion with his wonted good-

goodness, giving up his own wardrobe to make bandages for the wounded, and burying the dead with the utmost decency and care; besides which, he ordered an annual sacrifice in commemoration of them.

Trajan pursued his victory. He divided his army into three bodies, one of which he commanded in person, and gave the two others to Lusius Quietus, a Mauritanian nobleman, of whom we shall have occasion to speak farther hereafter, and to Maximus. He drove Decebalus from place to place, forced several castles on the tops of high mountains, and penetrated to the capital of the Dacians, Zarmisegethusa, then a considerable city, the ruins of which form the town now called Varhel in Transylvania.

Their king sues for peace, and obtains it; but on very hard terms.

Decebalus was alarmed at the very first steps he saw Trajan take. He was too good a warrior not to see at once that the Romans, commanded by Trajan, were different men from those he had worsted when headed by Domitian, and that they had again resumed their invincible valour and irresistible superiority. The battle in which he was defeated confirmed his alarms, and he made overtures of peace. To that end he desired an interview with Trajan, but that was refused, and Licinius Sura and Claudius Livianus, the pretorian prefect, were sent to treat with him. Decebalus, thinking it beneath him to enter into conference with any officers of the emperor, or not daring to trust them, sent on his side some of the principal men of his court to Trajan. Nothing was concluded. But when he found how closely the Romans pressed him, that his fortresses were gone, himself on the point of being besieged in his capital, and his sister taken prisoner by Maximus, he resolved to submit and make his peace at any rate.

Accordingly he agreed to the hardest terms that could be, stipulating to deliver up his arms, engines

gines of war, engineers, and all the deserters that were in his army; promising that no more should be received or harboured, that his fortresses should be demolished, his conquests relinquished, and that he would know no friends or enemies, but such as were so to the Romans. These articles being settled, he was permitted to appear before Trajan. When introduced to his presence, he prostrated himself on the ground, laid down his arms to show that he owned himself conquered, promised faithfully to keep his engagements, and, which to me seems very remarkable, to send ambassadors to the senate to have the treaty confirmed and ratified. Those ambassadors, however, did not go to Rome till Trajan did, after putting a garrison in Zarmisegethusa, and in other the most important posts in Dacia.

When introduced to the senate, they went through the same humiliating ceremonial as their king had done before Trajan. Laying down their arms, they stood in the posture of supplicants, waiting their doom from the mouths of their conquerors. The senate pardoned them, and ratified the treaty.

Trajan's triumph. *Phil. Soph.* 1—7.

Trajan triumphed for his victory, and took the surname of *Dacicus*. Philostratus tells a ridiculous story, of a piece, indeed, with the rest of his writings, relating to this triumph. He says, the emperor had with him, in his triumphal car, the sophist Dion Chrysostomus, and that he frequently turned round to him in the course of the ceremony, and addressed him with this pretty expression: "I do not know what you may think; but I love "you as dearly as I do myself." So absurd a fable needs no comment.

Combats of gladiators. Pantomimes re-instated. *Dio. Plin. Pan.* 33.

Trajan's triumph was followed by shows and feasts. He gave combats of gladiators, in which he took great delight, as a kind of representation of war, his darling passion. He recalled the pantomimes too, and permitted them to play again to the

the great satisfaction of the Roman populace, who knew not what to do without them, and repented their having desired their expulsion. Dion Cassius adds, that even Trajan himself was fond of them: and indeed it must be owned, that, perfect as he was as a prince, he was not without his foibles as a man. History goes further yet, and charges him with crimes contrary to nature. Of that kind was, according to Dion Cassius, his attachment to Pylades the pantomime, which, says that author, was the real motive of his re-instating a set of people so lately and so justly proscribed by his own command.

I place, as M. D. Tillemont does, Trajan's victory over the Dacians in the year of his fourth consulship, and his triumph either in that or the next year, when Licinius Sura, and one Suranus, little known in history, were consuls.

Two years of peace. Trajan applies to the cares of government. A. R. 853, and 854.

The peace concluded with the Dacians lasted two years, during which Dion Cassius says nothing remarkable of Trajan, but only tells us that he applied himself assiduously to the home government of the state, and thought it his duty to examine into and judge all matters of complaint that were laid before him. Pliny's epistles, however, inform us further, for which reason I will borrow a few facts from them.

Frontinus's death. His character and works. *Plin. Ep IV.* 8.

Frontinus, a man respected in his own times, honoured for the dignity with which he held several high posts, and now esteemed and valued for the works he left behind him, died in the year of Sura's consulship, or the year before. I have spoken of his being pretor in the beginning of Vespasian's reign; and doubtless it was by that emperor that he was promoted to the consulship, and sent to command in Britain, where Tacitus commends his exploits. Nerva made him superintendent of the aqueducts of Rome, a post given to none but men of the first distinction. Frontinus was a man of sound sense and judgment, ever careful to do his

Tac. Agr 17. *Frontin. de Aquæd*

duty well, and glad to be able to add reading and study to experience. To that disposition of his we owe his writings, which consist chiefly of a collection of various stratagems of war, and memoirs relating to the aqueducts of Rome. He tells us so himself in his short preface to the last of those treatises. "The emperor Nerva," says he, "having appointed me superintendent of the aqueducts of Rome, I thought* it ought to be my "first care to inform myself of what related to my "office; for the proper foundation of every administration must be a thorough knowledge of what "is fit to be done or let alone. In effect, can any "thing be more shameful for a man of sense, or "more unpardonable in him, than to be directed "how to do his duty by those that are under him? "Their ministry is necessary without doubt; but "then they ought to be made use of as helps only, "and instruments under the guidance of their "chief."

Pliny succeeds him in the dignity of augur. *Plin ep V. 1. IV. 8. X. 8.*

Pliny praises Frontinus's probity, and ranks him among the most valuable men in Rome. He succeeded him in the dignity of augur, which Trajan gave him.

The office of augur was the highest rank in the priesthood to which any senator could be raised. Pliny was congratulated upon it by a friend, who insisted strongly on the similitude this new promotion made between him and Cicero, who had also been augur. Pliny's answer to this compliment is very genteel and modest. "† May the gods," says he, "grant "that

* Primum ac potissimum existimo . . . . nosse quod suscepi. Neque enim ullum omnis actûs certius fundamentum crediderim quàm quæ facienda, quæque vitanda sint, posse decernere. Nam quid viro tam indecorum et intolerabile, quàm delegatum officium ex adjutorum agere præceptis? . . . quorum etsi necessariæ partes sunt, ut manus quædam et instrumentum agentis esse debent.

† Utinam, ut sacerdotium idem, et consolatum multo etiam junior quàm ille, sum consecutus, ita senex saltem ingenium ejus

" that as I have equalled him in the honours of the " priesthood and consulship, before the age at which " he attained them, I may also equal the sublime " reach of his genius when I grow more advanced " in years! What is in the power of man has been " granted to me as well as to many others; but to " attain the divine talent that distinguished him, " is a task too arduous; it were presumption even " to hope it; that must be the gift of Heaven."

The custom of choosing magistrates by ballot, introduced by the senate. *Vol. VIII. Plin. ep. III. 20. and IV. 25.*

Affairs that frequently occasioned great disturbances in the times of the republic, were decided with ease and quiet under the government of one man. The custom of electing by ballot is an instance of it. The reader may consult M. Rollin's history as to ancient times. What was settled and concluded in Pliny's time, in respect to that, was, according to his account, as follows:

From the time of reserving the election of magistrates to the senate, they were chosen *vivâ voce*, and matters were for a while conducted with becoming order and decency. Each candidate was called upon by name. The person called stood up, and set forth in few words what his pretensions were, and on what founded; he then gave an account of his whole life; produced the testimonials of the generals he had served under, and of his superior magistrates in case he had been questor; and last of all said who were the people in authority that interested themselves for him. They, when named, stood up, and, with a becoming gravity, void of all emphasis and urgent solicitation, plainly said what good qualities they knew in their friend the candidate, and what were their reasons for recommending him. If a candidate had any thing to reproach a competitor

aliqua ex parte assequi possim! Sed nimirùm quæ sunt in manu hominum, ea et mihi et multis aliis contigerunt; illud verò ut adipisci arduum sic et sperare nimium est, quod dari non nisi à Diis potest. *Plin. Ep. IV.* 8.

with, either as to his birth or his conduct, he did it modestly and without invectives. The senate heard what every one had to say, and afterwards made their choice at leisure.

In Pliny's time, this fine order was quite subverted. The meetings of the senate for elections were, if possible, more riotous than those of the people; none sat still; none held their tongues when they ought, or spoke when they should. A noise and clamour was heard on all sides; solicitors advanced in crowds to the middle of the hall with their candidates, formed different bodies there, and created a general uproar and confusion. The senators, sensible of the inconvenience of such proceedings, unanimously agreed, either towards the end of Trajan's third consulship, or the beginning of the year following, to petition that, for the future, elections should be made by ballot. The success was answerable to the good intent of this new regulation; men of honour and real worth were chosen, and every one had room to be content and satisfied.

As all things have their inconveniences as well as their conveniences, Pliny, even then, was apprehensive of the ill use that might be made of that private way of voting. "* I would not answer for "it," says he in a letter to one of his friends, "but "that bare-faced impudence may by and by creep "into this silent method of proceeding; for, how "few are there that respect the laws of honour and "honesty in private, so much as they do when "they know that the eyes of the public are fixed "upon them? Most men fear getting a bad character, "but few are afraid of having a bad conscience." What he foresaw happened. At the very next election,

* Est periculum, ne tacitis suffragiis impudentia irrepat. Nam quoto cuique eadem honestatis cura secretò, quæ palàm? Multi famam, conscientiam pauci verentur. *Plin. III.* 20.

election, several of the ballots were filled with nothing but jokes, puns, and downright puerilities. "* Such," says Pliny, "is the inconsiderate folly "and rashness of those bad minds that try to de- "ceive themselves by saying, *Who will know it?*" The senate expressed the highest dislike of so unbecoming a behaviour, and was greatly incensed at it; but, as the authors of it could not be found out, all that good men could do was to lament the hardship of the times, in which the evils were stronger than any remedy that could be applied.

Bribery checked. *Plin. VI. ep.* 19.

Another great abuse prevailed among those that were candidates for offices and employments. They sent presents, gave entertainments, and even deposited sums of money in the hands of a third person to be paid in case of success, or returned. Complaints were made of it to the senate, who directed the consuls to remonstrate to the emperor the consequence of those disorders, and beseech him to interpose his authority. He did so, and issued a declaration, in consequence of which the candidates were obliged to behave with more circumspection.

Candidates for offices obliged to have landed estates in Italy.

By the same law it was enacted, that none should be qualified to stand for any post or office, who had not one third at least of what they were worth in lands or houses in Italy. Trajan very justly thought it wrong that any should aspire to be a magistrate in Rome, who, for want of possessions in the country, might be induced to look upon Italy only as a place of passage.

Revival of the ancient ordinances, by which advocates were forbid to receive any thing from their clients.

It was but lately that the ancient ordinances, by which advocates were forbid to receive either money or presents from their clients, had been renewed; for such was the purport of the law Cincia passed towards the end of the second Punic war. This law was revived and enforced about the beginning of Nerva's reign: but greediness after money still got the

* Tantum licentiæ pravis ingeniis adjicit illa fiducia, *Quis sciet? Plin. IV.* 25.

better of all obstacles, and grew to such an height as gave the pretor Licinius Nepos, a man of firmness and resolution, an opportunity of showing his zeal at the time I am speaking of. Pliny tells us, in three of his letters, what were the steps the pretor took; but on the whole his account is obscure, nor would the particular circumstances, if we knew them all, be interesting to us. I shall only observe, that both the prince's and the senate's authority intervened in Nerva's plan of reformation; and that we find in Pliny the heads of a resolution of the senate, whereby not only advocates, but, which to me seems singular, their clients too, were obliged to swear, the one that they had not given, and the others that they had not received, any fee or reward. Every one that had a suit to commence was obliged to take that oath before his plea could be admitted.

Plin. V. 4, 14, & 21.

Pliny, who not only never entered into any pecuniary agreement with his clients, but never would receive the smallest token of acknowledgment from them, was pleased to see the law he had prescribed himself become general. He received compliments on the occasion from every quarter; some told him jokingly that he was a wizard; others, that this new regulation would put a stop to his avarice and rapine. The distinction he enjoyed could not but be highly pleasing, and indeed it must be owned he deserved it well.

Trajan's fifth consulship. A. R. 854.

In the year of Rome 854, Trajan entered on a fifth consulship with Maximus, whose second it was. This Maximus seems to be the same that stifled the rebellion of L. Antonius in Domitian's reign, and afterwards had a command of importance, in which he distinguished himself, in Trajan's war against Decebalus. The year of Trajan's fifth consulship was again a year of peace, and he continued to make the Romans love his government by repeated acts

of

of equity and goodness. The following is an instance of his zeal and readiness to confound calumny, and protect injured innocence.

Sundry affairs judged by Trajan with great equity and penetration. *Plin. ep. VI. 22.*

Lustricus Bruttianus took with him into the province of which he was governor one Montanus Atticinus, on the footing of a friend, and employed him there on several occasions. He soon had cause to repent it: the man he placed his confidence in proved so arrant a villain, so capable of any crime, that Bruttianus thought it incumbent on him to inform the emperor of it, and accordingly he wrote to Trajan. Atticinus was so vexed and terrified, that, to be revenged, he himself accused Bruttianus, and artfully getting hold of the magistrate's registers, tore several leaves out of them, and then produced them in court, mutilated as they were, in support of what he alleged against the accused. The affair was laid before Trajan, and Pliny was one of the judges. Each of the two parties pleaded his own cause, article by article, in a summary way; and Bruttianus, who knew himself innocent, not only refuted his adversary's charge, but laid open all his crimes, and proved what he said. Trajan, who wanted only to be set right, saw immediately on which side the truth was, and ordered sentence to be pronounced against the accuser, who accordingly was banished. Bruttianus was acquitted, and received the highest commendations for his integrity and good conduct.

Trajan thought it his duty to administer justice in person, and not to suspend the discharge of that important part of government, even whilst he was in the country, retired to any of his seats. Pliny, who spent three days with him at Centum-Cellæ,* gives an account of three affairs, each of which took up a whole day.

Plin. VI. [illegible]
** C[illegible] Ve[illegible]*

The first related to that most illustrious citizen of Ephesus, Claudius Aristo, a man of great magnificence and generosity, and extremely popular, but

without the least tincture of ambition. Numbers envied the splendour in which he lived, and one of them was base enough to accuse him falsely, and endeavour to be his ruin. Aristo was acquitted, and his enemies punished.

The next day a cause for adultery came on to be tried. Galitta, the wife of a tribune of the soldiers, who was at that very time in expectation of preferment, forfeited her own and her husband's honour by a criminal commerce with a centurion. The husband made his complaint to the commanding-officer of the army he was in, and the officer wrote to the emperor. Trajan immediately broke the centurion, and banished him. The next thing to be done was to prosecute the wife; but the husband, pacified by her arts, seemed disposed to drop his suit; nay, he went so far as to live with her, after all the noise he had made, as if all he wanted had been to get rid of a rival. He was obliged, however, to prosecute the suit he had begun, and Galitta, to the sorrow of her accuser, was condemned to suffer the penalties of Augustus's law against adultery. As this affair was not of a nature to be judged by the emperor, and what made him take cognisance of it was, the station of life of the parties concerned, he took particular care, when he pronounced sentence, to explain that circumstance, and to repeat several times that they were officers of the army, that none might think the course of justice interrupted, or that he had any thoughts of setting up for judge in every cause.

An affair that had been long depending, and in which the emperor's freedman Eurythmus was a party concerned, came on the third day. The dispute was about a codicil to a will, suspected to be forged; on which account the testator's heirs had brought their action against Eurythmus and a Roman knight called Sempronius Senecio. At first all the heirs instituted themselves joint parties; but in

a

a little time, several of them desired leave to drop their prosecutions, as if out of respect for the emperor's freedman; upon which Trajan, addressing himself to them, nobly said, "Why drop your prosecu-"tions? My freedman is not Polycletes, nor am I "Nero." Notwithstanding that, only two of the heirs appeared in court the day their cause was to be judged, and they desired that all who were jointly concerned with them in the event should be obliged to join them, or that they themselves might have leave to decline all further proceedings. The advocate that pleaded for Sempronius and Eurythmus opposed their demand, saying, it would reflect dishonour on his clients if granted. "It is not "that which concerns me," interrupted Trajan hastily; "I might myself be suspected of favouring in-"justice." Then, addressing himself to the judges, he added, "Consider what we had best do. It "seems to me as if those people want to com-"plain of their not being at liberty to prosecute "their right." It was resolved, that all the heirs should prosecute, or make known their reasons why they did not, that every one might judge how far they were just; or, in default, be subject to the penalties awarded against calumniators. Such was Trajan's delicacy in matters where his reputation was concerned. He was unwilling there should be even the least suspicion of its being possible for him to swerve from the strictest rules of justice.

Such was the manner in which the day-time was spent at Centum-Cellæ. In the evening, the company supped together, the prince never failing to invite all the great men of his court. The table was modestly, not sumptuously, spread. Trajan treated his guests with music and a play, or some sprightly entertaining conversation, which did not end till pretty late at night. On the last day of the emperor's stay there, he sent presents of hospitality to all that had

Trajan's modesty and engagingaffability at table.

had borne him company thither, as was usual among friends.

Port of Centum-Cellæ.

He was at that time engaged in a work at Centum-Cellæ of great service to the public. He made a harbour there which he called after his own name, and is the present port of Civita Vecchia, where the pope keeps his gallies. Trajan formed the haven by building two piers out into the sea, and, in the space between them, a mole or little island, by which the violence of the waves was broken, and the ships in the basin within secured from storms and bad weather.

Port of Ancona. *Tillem. Traj. art. 23. Ant. Expl. Vol. IV. Part II. p. 295.*

He afterwards built, likewise at his own expense, a haven at Ancona, on the Adriatic sea, to make Italy accessible on all sides with ease and convenience. The monument that was erected to his memory by the senate and the Roman people, as a token of their gratitude for that favour, is still to be seen there. The inscription says it was in the nineteenth year of Trajan's reign, which we reckon the 867th of Rome.

Pliny sets out for his government of Pontus and Bithynia.

It was soon after Pliny's journey to Centum-Cellæ that, according to M. de Tillemont, he set out for Pontus and Bithynia. Trajan gave him the government of those two provinces as his lieutenant, together with the rank of propretor and the power of consul. Bithynia was one of the people's provinces, and as such had always been used to be governed by proconsuls drawn by lot. But Trajan himself, in one of his letters to Pliny, tells him, so many abuses had crept in as required a thorough reformation. The Bithynians had very lately accused, and prosecuted for concussion, two of their proconsuls, Julius Bassus and Rufus Varenus. It was probably for that reason that Trajan was desirous to take that province into his own hands, at least for a time, and that he pitched on Pliny as a fit person to set matters there to rights.

Plin. ep. IV. 9. V. 20. VI. 5, & 13. VII. 6. & 10.

Pliny

Pliny entered on his government the seventeenth of September, and remained in it about eighteen months. We have his letters during that time to Trajan, and the emperor's answers to them. We find by them that Trajan suffered himself to be called *Domine*, Lord, which Augustus never would. But the times were altered, and custom prevailed. *Plin. ep. IX.*

What is most remarkable in the epistolary correspondence between Pliny and Trajan is, on one side, the magistrate's care and caution to consult his sovereign in all affairs that could admit of the least doubt; and, on the other, the dignity, justice, and sound sense of Trajan's answers, together with the marks of affection he bestows on Pliny as his friend. But, above all, nothing is more interesting to us than Pliny's famous letter concerning the Christians of those days. Though it is to be met with every where, I think it too essential a part of a work like this to be omitted. I shall therefore transcribe it at length, with Trajan's answer to it. Pliny writes as follows to the emperor:

Pliny's letter to Trajan concerning the Christians. *Plin. X. 97.*

"It is my constant custom, my lord, to consult "you whenever I am in doubt how to act; for who "can be more proper to direct me right, or supply "the deficiency of my ignorance? I never yet was "called upon, either to commence a prosecution "against Christians, or to judge any cause relating "to them, and consequently cannot say what, in "those matters, deserves punishment, nor how far "that punishment, or my perquisitions after them, "ought to be extended. I have therefore been at "a loss what to determine on many heads; whether "it be proper to make any distinction of ages, or "to treat young and old alike; whether repentance "ought not to plead for pardon in favour of such "as having been Christians cease to be so; whe-"ther the bare name of Christian is to be punished, "when no crime can be laid to the charge of the

"man

" man who professes that belief; or the crimes to-
" gether with the name. My conduct with regard
" to such as have been brought before me, charged
" with being Christians, has hitherto been as fol-
" lows. I have asked them whether they were
" Christians. On their confessing that they were,
" I have put the same question to them a second
" and a third time, threatening them with death. On
" their persisting in it, I have ordered them for exe-
" cution. For, without examining whether their
" confession implied any real guilt or not, I never
" doubted but that their perverse obstinacy deserved
" to be punished. Among those whose frenzy has
" been carried to that pitch, I have met with
" some who are citizens of Rome. Those I have set
" apart to be sent thither. By following these af-
" fairs so closely as I have done, I have perceived,
" as generally is the case, that numbers of others
" have sprung up, and some of them of a new kind.
" An anonymous list has been sent me of a multi-
" tude of names; but those that I have had brought
" before me in consequence of it, deny their ha-
" ving ever been Christians, and, to convince me
" of it, have repeated after me the form of prayers
" that we offer up to our gods; they have likewise
" offered up wine and incense to your images,
" which I ordered to be brought with those of the
" gods; and have renounced and cursed the person
" called Christ. These proofs have seemed to me
" sufficient to acquit them of the accusation laid to
" their charge; for I am positively told, it is im-
" possible to force a real Christian to do any such
" thing. Others that have been brought before
" me have at first confessed they were Christians,
" but afterwards denied it; and others, again, have
" owned their having been Christians formerly, but
" averred they had ceased to be so, some for three,
" some more, and some for twenty years past. All of
" them have worshipped your image and the statues

" of

" of the gods, and have consented to curse Christ.
" As to any thing further, * they protested that all
" they had been guilty of was meeting on certain
" days before sun-rise, and worshipping Christ as
" God, singing hymns to his honour, and binding
" themselves by oath not to do any wrong thing,
" never to commit theft, violence, or adultery,
" never to break their faith when given, nor with-
" hold a trust committed to their care; after which
" they parted, and met again to take a plain and
" innocent repast together. They added, that they
" had abstained from all these practices ever since
" the publication of the edict, by which, agreeably
" to your commands, I forbid their meetings. To
" be certain of the fact, I ordered two women-
" slaves to be put to the rack: all I could gather
" from their confession was, that a foolish wrong-
" headed superstition had got the better of them.
" For these reasons I have suspended my inquiries,
" and resolved to consult you, the more readily, as
" the number of those that are in danger on this
" account is very great, and consists of persons of
" every age, sex, and condition; for not only ci-
" ties, but towns and villages, are infected with
" the contagion of this superstition. The evil is,
" however, not yet past remedy. Already do I see
" our almost deserted temples fill again, and our
" solemn sacrifices, long laid aside, resume their
" pristine splendour. But lately one could hardly
" find purchasers for the victims; now quantities
" are sold. We see by this what multitudes may
" be

* Affirmabant autem hanc fuisse summam vel culpæ suæ vel erroris, quòd essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem; seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent; quibus peractis, morem sibi discedendi fuisse, rursusque coëundi ad capiendum cibum, promiscuum tamen et innocuum.

" be reclaimed, if the door of repentance be but " opened to them."

This letter is of extraordinary value to us on account of the testimony Pliny gives in it of the purity of the morals of our first fathers; a testimony which none can object to, since it proceeds from one who condemned and made them suffer death. It shows us, too, how prodigiously the number of Christians was increased within a few years after the first rise of Christianity, and gives us room to lament the blindness of a man in other respects so clear-sighted and judicious as was Pliny, who, without examining into the truth or falsity of a doctrine, put men to death merely because they believed in it. Trajan, so wise and good a prince on all other occasions, showed on this no more equity than his lieutenant. His answer was as follows:

Trajan's answer.

" You have acted as you ought, my dear Pliny, " in your proceedings against such as have been " brought before you charged with being Chris- " tians; for it is not possible to establish any one " general law, or to lay down any particular form " or method of proceeding, alike applicable to all " cases. Make no inquiries after them, nor take " any pains to find them out. If they are brought " before your tribunal, and convicted, it is your " business to punish them; but with this restriction, " however, that if any one denies his being a Chris- " tian, and proves his assertion true, that is, if he " worships our gods, even though there be room " to suspect him for what is past, his repentance " ought to plead forgiveness. * As to anonymous " letters or memorials, no regard ought to be paid " to

* Sine auctore verò propositi libelli nullo crimine locum habere debent. Nam et pessimi exempli, neque nostri seculi est.

" to them in any case whatever. It is a bad pre-
" cedent, ill suiting the times we live in."

It was a step becoming Trajan to forbid anonymous accusations. But how inconsistent is he in the first part of his answer to forbid, on one hand, making inquiry after Christians, and to order, on the other, that they should be treated as criminals whenever they were accused?

Persecution of the church under Trajan. *Tillem.*

Such is, in all respects, the idea we ought to have of the persecution the church suffered under Trajan. Though that prince, warmed perhaps by a superstitious zeal for his own religion, or rather guided by a false maxim of policy, which made him look upon all innovations in religious matters as dangerous to the state, hated Christians, and authorized the punishing of them even unto death; yet he issued no general edict against them. The unruliness of the mob, their inveterate dislike to Christians, the caprice and cruelty of the governors of provinces, and Trajan's making it a law to himself to punish perseverance in Christianity with death, were the causes of numbers of martyrdoms in his reign. The most celebrated of those that suffered gloriously for the cause of Christ, were St Simeon of Jerusalem, and St Ignatius of Antioch.

Pliny's death.

Pliny seems not to have lived long after his return from his government of Pontus and Bithynia. History makes no further mention of him, nor are the events referred to in his letters much posterior to that time.

His character taken from his own letters by M. Rollin. *Ant. Hist. Vol. XII.*

It is impossible to read Pliny's writings without loving the writer; and I should think it a duty incumbent on me to attempt a sketch of his mind and excellent qualities, from the insight his letters give us of them, if an abler hand than mine had not already performed that task. M. Rollin has taken pleasure in describing a character so like his own in all respects, except religion, which sanctified and enhanced

enhanced the virtues of the latter, whilst Pliny's motives extended no further than his love of fame and reputation.

Remarkable instance of Pliny's probity. *Plin. ep. V. 1.*

As M. Rollin neither could, nor indeed ought, to say all that might be said, he has left out a transaction, every circumstance of which, in my opinion, is interesting, and does honour to Pliny. The reader may not be displeased to find it here.

Pomponia Gratilla, who seems to have been the widow of Arulænus Rusticus, and was banished by Domitian at the same time that he put her husband to death, had, by a former marriage, a son called Assudius Curianus, whose conduct afforded her very little satisfaction. She disinherited him by her will, and left her estate to Pliny, Sertorius Severus, an ancient pretor, and some Roman knights of great families and distinction. Curianus, resolving to contest his mother's will, went to Pliny, and told him, that if he would give up his share of the inheritance only for form's sake, he would give him a defeazance of that gift. Curianus's scheme was to establish by that means a prejudice against the validity of the will he wanted to set aside. Pliny answered, that it would be unbecoming his character to take a public step to undo a private act. "Besides," added he, "you are rich, and have no child; "any gift that I could make you, would be suspected of interested views; nor indeed would "what you desire, should I agree to it, be of any "service to you. The case would be different were "I to renounce my right in your favour, and that "I am very willing to do, if you can but convince "me that your mother disinherited you unjustly." "Very well," replied Curianus, "I take you at your "word, and you yourself shall be the judge." Pliny paused a while, and after thinking, "I agree to "it," said he; "for why should I have a less good "opinion of myself than you seem to have of me? "However, I protest, and desire you will take "notice

" notice of it, that if I find your cause bad, I will " have resolution enough to confirm your mother's " sentence."—" As to that," replied Curianus, "you " will do as you please, for I am sure you will desire " nothing but what is just." Pliny chose for his assistants two of the most respectable men in Rome, Cerellius and Frontinus, and with them opened a court of justice in his own apartment. Curianus pleaded his cause. Pliny answered him, because neither of the others could defend the honour of the testatrix. He afterwards retired to his closet with his assistant-judges, and having taken their opinions, came out again, and pronounced sentence in these words: " Curianus, your mother had good and " sufficient reasons to disinherit you."

Though Pliny was judge, advocate, and party, in the cause, his sentence was respected by the man against whom it was pronounced. Curianus cited the other heirs named in the will to appear before the tribunal of the Centumvirate, but made no mention of Pliny. The trial drew near, and Pliny's coheirs dreaded the issue on account of the misfortunes of the times, for Domitian was then alive. They were afraid that, as some of them had been friends to Rusticus and Gratilla, what was in itself a cause merely civil, might be turned into a criminal one against them, as had been the case with many others. They imparted their uneasiness to Pliny, and desired him to propose a compromise. Pliny undertook to do it. He offered Curianus what the Roman law calls the Falcidian fourth, that is to say, the fourth part of the inheritance, secured to the next heirs of kin, by the law of Falcidius; engaging at the same time to pay the same proportion himself. Curianus accepted the proposal; and, to show how far integrity and uprightness of heart is sure to command respect, that same Curianus, dying

some years after, left Pliny a legacy*, not very considerable indeed, but infinitely more pleasing to him, considering the circumstances of things, than a much greater would have been on other terms.

Friendship between Pliny and Tacitus.

Pliny and Tacitus were united by the strictest ties of friendship. Their esteem for each other was founded on a similitude of sentiments of probity, hatred of tyranny, and love of learning and of eloquence. They were generally named together as the two greatest orators of those days; and Pliny gives us a proof of it in a little adventure which he seems to relate with pleasure. Tacitus chanced one day to enter into a pretty long conversation about various subjects of literature, with a stranger who sat next to him in the theatre, and was very desirous to know who he was. "You know me," answered Tacitus, "by my writings."—"Are you Tacitus or Pliny?" replied the stranger with vivacity. The bare mention of literature and eloquence immediately called to mind the names of those two illustrious friends, the supports and ornaments of them †.

Plin. ep. IX. 23.

No rivalship or jealousy was ever known between them. They sent each other their works to read and criticise, and received on both sides what emendations were proposed with cordiality and thanks. Pliny was younger than Tacitus, and from his first setting out in life was ambitious to imitate so great a model, and to follow him as closely as he could, though at a great distance, as he himself says. He attained the desired point, and in it the completion of his wishes. "I am delighted ‡," says he in a letter

Plin. VII. 20.

* Legatum mihi obvenit modicum, sed amplissimo gratius. *Plin.*

† Exprimere non possum, quàm sit jucundum mihi, quòd nomina nostra, quasi litterarum propria, non hominum, litteris reddantur. *Plin.*

‡ Gaudeo quòd, si quis de studiis sermo, unà nominamur; quòd de te loquentibus statim occurro. Nec desunt qui utrique nostrûm præferantur. Sed nihil interest meâ quo loco jungimur.

letter to Tacitus, " to hear people, when they talk " of eloquence, name us together. If you are men- " tioned, my name follows. There are orators that " are preferred before us both; but I care not what " rank is assigned us; the highest honour I aim " at is being next to you. You must have ob- " served, too, that in wills, unless the testator be a " particular friend of one of us, we are put toge- " ther, and have the same legacies left us. The " inference I would draw from these observations " is, that we ought to love each other more than " ever, since the same taste for letters, the same " manners, fame, and, in short, the last wishes of " the dying, all concur to unite us."

Tacitus seems to have outlived Pliny; for the latter, who does not fail to make particular mention in his letters of the friends death robbed him of, at the same time giving them the encomiums they deserved, takes no manner of notice of Tacitus's death. Besides that, the importance and extent of Tacitus's writings give us room to think he must have lived till near the latter end of Trajan's reign. He did not begin to write history till that prince was on the throne; and the first work we have of his, I mean his Description of the Manners of the Germans, is dated in Trajan's second consulship, which was the first year of his reign. After that, Tacitus wrote the Life of Agricola. Encouraged by the reception those two works, which may be justly stiled masterpieces, met with, he set about writing his History, which comprehended a space of eight-and-twenty years, from Galba's second consulship to Domitian's death. He tells us his design was to continue it down through the reigns of Nerva

Tacitus seems to have outlived Pliny.

Order of his works.

Lips. ad Tac. Hist. et Tillem. Trajan. art. 22.

Tac. Hist. I 1.

Nam mihi primus, qui à te proximus. Quin etiam in testamentis debes adnotâsse, nisi quis fortè alterutri nostrùm amicissimus, eadem legata, et quidem pariter accipimus. Quæ omnia huc spectant, ut invicem ardentiùs diligamus, quum tot vinculis nos studia, mores, fama, suprema denique hominum judicia constringant.

and Trajan. But * though he congratulates himself on having so pleasing and rich a subject to treat in his old age, and extols the happiness of the times he had lived to see, times in which, says he, men were at liberty to think as they pleased, and to speak what they thought; I cannot but be of opinion that so bold a writer as he was, was ill cut out to pen the history of a prince yet living, how deserving soever he might be of praise. And accordingly we find, that after finishing the work we call his History, instead of bringing it down lower, he went much further back, and composed his Annals, beginning at the death of Augustus, and ending at that of Nero. He intended, too, if he had lived long enough, to write the whole reign of Augustus, after finishing his Annals. Death or sickness was probably what prevented him, for we find no traces of his having begun it. His History and Annals composed thirty books in all, but we have lost thirteen of them, and of the seventeen remaining, that have escaped the gnawing tooth of time, four are more or less mutilated and imperfect.

Tac. III. Ann. 24.

His birth and life, so far as we know of them. *Plin. Hist. Nat. VII. 16. Tac. Hist. I. 1.*

Tacitus may possibly have been the son of Cornelius Tacitus, a Roman knight, intendent of Belgia, mentioned by Pliny the naturalist. He entered the lists of fame when Vespasian was on the throne; Titus promoted him in dignity, and he was chosen pretor under Domitian, the very year that prince celebrated his secular games. Nerva made him consul. He pleaded a long time with distinguished grace and majesty. His historical writings have immortalized him. I have endeavoured to blend them with this work; and by the use I have made of them, my readers may form a more adequate

Plin. ep. II. 11.

* Principatum divi Nervæ et imperium Trajani, uberiorem securioremque materiam, senectuti seposui; rarâ temporum felicitate, ubi sentire quæ velis, et quæ sentias dicere licet. *Tac. Hist. I. 1.*

adequate idea of him than any description I can give would convey.

Another personage, less illustrious indeed in the learned world, though even there he makes some figure, Silius Italicus, died some time in the beginning of Trajan's reign. I have already taken notice of the injury he did his reputation in Nero's time. He retrieved his honour, however, in a great measure, and regained the esteem of all, by the good use he made of his favour with Vitellius, and the prudence and uprightness with which he behaved whilst proconsul of Asia. Eloquence and the bar were his occupations so long as he had strength and spirits equal to the task. Poetry was the amusement of his old age. Pliny justly observes,* that there is more labour than genius in his verses. Though no great favourite with the muses, he persevered in courting them. When retired from the hurry of business, he divided his time between conversation on literary topics, and the composition of his poem on the second Punic war. He lived many years in that state of retirement, † honoured and esteemed as one of the first of Rome; but without power or influence, and consequently without being envied. Infirmities increasing with his years, he shut himself up in his country-seats in Campania, and could not be induced to leave them, even by the necessity of paying his court to a new emperor. He staid there whilst Trajan made his first entry into Rome: ‡ an act of liberty, which does honour to the prince who blamed it not, and to the subject who dared to do it. Silius was fond of pictures and statues, and a judge of them. He collected numbers, representing the greatest men of antiqui-

Death of Silius Italicus. A short sketch of his life. *Plin. ep. III. 7.*

* Scribebat carmina majore curâ quàm ingenio.

† Fuit inter principes civitatis, sine potentia, sine invidia.

‡ Magna Cæsaris laus, sub quo hoc liberum fuit; magna illius qui hac libertate ausus est uti.

ty. His veneration for them all was great, but for none more than Virgil, whose birth-day he kept with more solemnity than his own, and whose tomb he often visited with a religious respect. At the age of seventy-five he was seized with a disorder that was judged incurable. Rather than bear the pain of it, he resolved to starve himself to death, and did so, notwithstanding all the entreaties that could be used to dissuade him from it. He was the last consul that Nero made, and lived to be the last of all he did make. He left a son, whom he had the satisfaction of seeing consul.

Death of Martial. *Plin. ep. III.* 20.

The poet Martial, whose epigrams every one is acquainted with, died soon after Silius Italicus. What pity that there is not as much modesty and decorum in all his writings as there is true wit and spirit in some of them! Martial was always indigent, and subsisted in Rome through Domitian's liberalities, which he too often sued for in a low and abject manner. Domitian dying, Martial retired to his native country Bilbilis * in Spain, after receiving a handsome present from Pliny, whom he always praised in his works. He lived about three years longer; and, so far as we can judge of the time of his death by the order of Pliny's letters, it must have been in the year of Rome 851 that he died.

Juvenal wrote most of his satires in Trajan's reign.

Juvenal is thought to have written most of his satires in Trajan's reign. They savour strongly, as M. Boileau observes, of the school in which the author of them was educated. They contain indeed high and noble sentiments, together with great energy: but that energy is often carried to a degree of cynic impudence; and a certain stiffness and air of oratory reigns throughout the whole, ill suiting the taste of those that are acquainted with the delicate

* Bilbilis *seems not to have been far distant from the present* Catalaiud *in Arragon.*

licate pleasantry, select graces, and easy turn of Horace's satires. I will venture to add, that Juvenal is, in my opinion, not equal to Persius, who is infinitely more modest, conveys more ideas, and whose obscure and unemphatic style plainly shows the writer thought what he said.

Death of the informer Regulus. Instances of his audaciousness and villany. *Plin. ep. II. 20. IV. 2. and 7. fol. 2*

To so many names, more or less esteemed in the republic of letters, it may not be improper to join one of their cotemporaries, who indeed resembled them in no one good or amiable qualification, who was a bad orator and a wicked man, but famous, powerful, and enriched by the scandalous abuse he made of the art of speech. I mean Regulus. I have already had occasion to make frequent mention of him, to which I now beg leave to add some curious and interesting anecdotes from Pliny.

Regulus is a flagrant instance of what impudence and effrontery can do, without the assistance of any one talent, and almost in despite of nature. His* voice was low and inarticulate, his tongue thick, his apprehension dull, and he had no memory at all. With all these defects he had the secret of imposing on the vulgar, on whom he palmed an impetuous torrent of speech for oratory. He was an active, turbulent, and intriguing genius. If he had a cause to plead, he desired and obtained leave to speak as long as he thought proper; taking care always to have about him an hireling throng ready to admire and praise him; in a word, he was thoroughly master of the art of shining and making a great noise, without being possessed of any real merit.

To his ill-founded pride and ambition was added an inordinate desire of riches. It mattered not to him how he got them. We have already seen him, *Vol. IV. Tac. Hist. IV. 42.*

4 when

* Imbecillum latus, os confusum, hæsitans lingua tardissima inventio, memoria nulla, nihil denique præter ingenium insanum; et tamen ea impudentiâ ipsoque illo furore pervenit, ut à plurimis orator habeatur. *Plin. ep. IV. 7.*

when young, wallow in the blood of innocents unjustly accused by him, and enrich himself with their spoils. He received seven * millions of sesterces from Nero, for helping him to destroy the family of the Crassi. Art and impudence, and every other means he could think of, were practised by him, to get legacies from all the rich men he knew. Pliny, in one of his letters, gives us the following instances of his tricks of that kind.

* L.56,000.

Piso Licinianus, brother to Crassus, whose death Regulus was the cause of, and who was himself under sentence of banishment, probably at his suit too; the same Piso, who was adopted by Galba, and killed with him, left a widow called Verania, who lived till Trajan's time. Verania being taken dangerously ill, Regulus, though he knew how odious the sight of him must be, went to see her, sat down by her bedside, and, pretending great concern for her health, began to act the astrologer. He asked her what day and hour she was born. On her telling him, he composed his countenance, looked grave and thoughtful, muttered somewhat between his lips, and counted over his fingers' ends; all to keep the sick lady in suspense, and make her expect something wonderful. At length breaking silence, "You "are," said he to her, "in your climacteric year; "but you will get the better of this fit of sickness: "and, to convince you of it, I will consult an aru- "spice that never yet has failed me." Accordingly he offered up a sacrifice, came back and told Verania that the entrails of the victim agreed exactly with the stars. People are apt to believe what they wish. The sick lady, pleased with the thoughts of recovering her health, ordered her will to be brought, and added a legacy in favour of Regulus. She grew worse, and died soon after, exclaiming bitterly against his deceit.

He was not so lucky in an attack he made upon Velleius Blæsus, a rich old man of consular distinction.

tion. Regulus had paid his court to him for some time, when Blæsus was taken dangerously ill, and talked of altering his will. The knave, not doubting but he should come in for a good share of his estate, begged and prayed the physicians that attended him to exert their utmost skill to prolong his life. The will was signed and executed, and he immediately changed his note. "How long," said he then to the same doctors, "do you intend to tor-"ment a poor dying man? Why will not you let "him die in peace, since you cannot save his life?" Blæsus died, his will was opened, and not a farthing was left to Regulus.

His impudence, as I before said, was equal to his knavery. A lady of distinction, whose name was Aurelia, wanting to have her will signed by seven witnesses, as the Roman law required, desired Regulus to be one. He consented, waited on her at the time appointed, and found her very richly dressed for the ceremony. Regulus begged she would be so kind to leave him the clothes she had on. Aurelia thought he joked, but, in fact, he was quite in earnest, and pressed her so strongly that he made her open her will again to insert his legacy. He looked at her all the time she was writing, and, when she had done, took up the will and read what she had written, that he might be sure there was no mistake in it. By such tricks as these it was that, though born to nothing, he grew so immensely rich, that he told Pliny one day he had been consulting the entrails of victims to know when he should be worth a round sum of sixty * millions of sesterces, and that he had found by them he should have twice that money. * £ 480,000.

With all that wealth, Regulus had but one son, and him he lost very young. Pliny thinks he did not grieve much at it, but seems rather of opinion, that love of interest was stronger in him than the ties of nature. What would induce any one to judge

judge the same, is, that he had that son emancipated to enable him to dispose of his mother's dower which was settled on him, and was very considerable; and from that time fawned on and flattered him to induce the child to make him his heir. Consequently he was a gainer by his death; and, from his turn of mind, may reasonably be supposed to have comforted himself readily enough, though he put on all the outward show of grief and anguish, and even over-acted his part. His son had several little coaches and saddle-horses, dogs, nightingales, parrots, and blackbirds, all which Regulus ordered to be killed round his funeral-pile. He multiplied, in every shape, the statues and pictures of the deceased, had numbers of them painted, and busts and statues made of bronze, wax, silver, ivory, and marble. He wrote a book, too, of his son's life, though but an infant when he died, and read it publicly to a numerous audience. Not content with that, he had a thousand copies of it transcribed, and sent them to all parts of Italy and the provinces; at the same time writing to the senate of each city to desire they would choose out of their respective bodies such of their members as had the best and most audible voices to read it to the people assembled.

I shall conclude this, perhaps already too long, account of Regulus, with a judicious reflection of Pliny. "* What spirit!" says he, "what fire, was "in that man! What good might he not have done "had he taken a right turn! But no," adds Pliny immediately after, "I mistake. Good men are less "active than bad; for, as ignorance is the mother "of

* Hanc ille vim, (seu quo alio nomine vocando est intentio quidquid velis obtinendi,) si ad potiora vertisset, quantum boni efficere potuisset! Quamquam minor vis bonis quàm malis inest: at sicut ἀμαθία μεν θράσος, λογισμὸς δὲ ἔκνον φέρει, ita recta ingenia debilitat verecundia, perversa confirmat audacia. *Plin. Ep. VI. 7.*

"of impudence, and real knowledge is often pro-
"ductive of bashfulness; so virtuous minds are
"checked and withheld by the modesty that is
"inseparable from them, whilst men of vicious
"principles are spurred on by their brazenness."

I have observed elsewhere how low and abject a creature Regulus became at the time of Domitian's death. He survived him some years. There is room to infer from Pliny's letters that he died before the year of Rome 853.

A child of thirteen years of age wins the premium for poetry. *Till. in Traj. art.* 18.

After speaking of men that made a figure in the learned world, it would be unfair not to mention that famous child Valerius Pudens, who, at the age of thirteen, carried off the prize for poetry at the capitolian games in 857.

We have lost sight of Trajan for a long time; let us return to him, and relate what we know of his second war with the Dacians.

SECT. III.

Trajan's second war against the Dacians. Causes of the rupture. Decebalus, alarmed at Trajan's preparatives, sues for peace. He endeavours to get Trajan assassinated. An officer of distinction, traiterously seized by him, poisons himself. Trajan builds a bridge over the Danube. Decebalus conquered, and, in danger of being taken, kills himself. His hidden treasures discovered. Colonies established by Trajan in Dacia and the neighbouring provinces. Trajan's second triumph. Arabia Petræa subdued by Palma. Trajan's occupations during his abode in Rome. Crassus conspires against him, and is only banished for it. Trajan makes war against the Parthians, and goes into the East. Armenia conquered by Trajan, and made a Roman province. Conquest of Mesopotamia. Arabia Petræa subdued,

&c.

and made a Roman province. Trajan maintains a proper discipline among his troops, as much by his own example as by his orders. Lusius Quietus, by birth a Mauritanian, one of Trajan's best generals. Barbarous nations to the north of Armenia subdued by Trajan. Trajan's return to Rome, which he leaves again towards the year 865, *to renew the war against the Parthians. Violent earthquake at Antioch. Trajan consults the oracle of Heliopolis, and receives an enigmatical answer. Trajan throws a bridge of boats over the Tigris. The Roman method of building a bridge of boats. Trajan conquers Assyria. He returns towards Babylon. Trajan takes the cities of Ctesiphon and Susa. Prosperity seems to have turned his brain. He falls down the Tigris, crosses the Persian gulf, and enters the ocean. He takes a sea-port on the south coast of Arabia Felix. He envies Alexander his great renown. He visits the ruins of Babylon. The countries lately conquered rebel. Trajan subdues them again. He gives the Parthians a king. Trajan undertakes the siege of Atra, but is forced to raise it. Rebellions and disasters of the Jews in Cyrène, Egypt, Cyprus, and Mesopotamia. Trajan falls sick. Loss of his conquests in the East. Adrian's schemes and intrigues to make Trajan adopt him. Trajan had quite different views, and thought not of adopting Adrian. Trajan dies, and Adrian succeeds him by virtue of a forged adoption. Honours done to Trajan's memory. Duration of his life and reign. His virtues and his vices.*

Trajan's second war against the Dacians. Causes of the rupture. *Dio.*

TRAJAN'S second war against the Dacians began, according to M. de Tillemont, in the year of Rome 855. The cause of it is imputed by Dion Cassius to Decebalus, who openly infringed every article of the last treaty of peace concluded with the Romans. He sheltered their deserters, fabricated

fabricated arms, rebuilt his forts that had been demolished, and invited his neighbours to join him. Nay, some of Pliny's letters to Trajan seem to intimate an actual understanding in private with the Parthians. He attacked and harassed all that had sided against him in the late war, and took possession by main force of a territory belonging to the Jazygi. *Plin. Ep. X 18—16. Dio.*

On the other hand, we know perfectly well how ambitious Trajan was of making conquests. He looked upon Decebalus's forced submission as nothing, and aimed at taking his crown from him. His usual asseveration, when he wanted to affirm a thing very strongly, was, "so surely as I hope to "make Dacia a Roman province!" We may therefore justly conclude he was glad of an opportunity to make the senate declare Decebalus an enemy to the Roman people. *Amm. Marc. l. XXIV.*

The senate's decree, and Trajan's preparatives in consequence of it, to carry on the war in person, as he had done before, struck such terror on the Dacians that they abandoned their king, and fled in crowds over to the Romans. Decebalus, alarmed at their desertion, desired peace. The Romans refused it on any other terms than his giving up his arms and person, to be disposed of as the emperor should think proper. Decebalus's soul was too haughty to submit to such injurious terms. Rather than do it, he chose war, and accordingly assembled his troops, made alliances, and took every step he could to give Trajan a warm reception. Decebalus, alarmed at Trajan's preparatives, sues in vain for peace.

None could have blamed him had he stopped there. But, instead of that, he took the most cowardly steps to get rid of an enemy he despaired of being able to conquer. He employed assassins to murder Trajan, who was always easy of access, and especially in time of war. One of those wretches was suspected and taken up; and, when put to the rack, discovered He endeavours to get Trajan assassinated.

discovered his accomplices, by which means Decebalus's black design miscarried.

An officer of distinction, traiterously seized by him, poisons himself.

After failing in his attempt against Trajan, he endeavoured to lay hold of some friend or other of his, and succeeded in regard to Longinus, a brave officer, commander of a legion. Decebalus desired a conference with him, under pretence of having at last resolved to surrender. His request was granted; Longinus met him, but was traiterously seized upon, loaded with irons, and dragged away to the enemy's camp. There the traitor began to question him about Trajan's designs; but could get no answer from him. Decebalus, however, treated him with humanity, only keeping him close guarded, in hopes of obtaining better terms from Trajan, who, he knew, had a great value for that officer.

Accordingly he sent a messenger to Trajan, with offers to set Longinus at liberty, on condition that the whole country taken from the Dacians should be restored them, as far as the Danube, and the expenses of the war reimbursed them. Though Trajan would have been very sorry to lose Longinus, he was not willing to buy him back at so dear a rate. He therefore returned Decebalus a general answer, which, leaving him still in some degree of uncertainty, prevented his proceeding to extremes. In the mean time Longinus took his resolution. Having procured a sufficient quantity of poison by means of a freedman that attended him, he wrote Trajan a letter, wherein, in order to deceive Decebalus, he entreated the emperor to save his life. The letter was dispatched, with a proper verbal message by the freedman, and in the night Longinus poisoned himself. The Dacian king was bitterly incensed when he found his prey had escaped him, and resolved, if possible, to be revenged on the freedman. He sent a centurion, taken with Longinus, to Trajan, with offers of the deceased's body and ten other prisoners in exchange for the freedman.

Trajan,

Trajan, very justly preferring the preservation of a living man to the burial of a dead corpse, retained not only the freedman, but the centurion too, who would hardly have been safe had he returned back to Decebalus.

Trajan builds a bridge over the Danube.

Trajan's aim, as I observed before, was to conquer Dacia, and make it a Roman province. To that end he resolved to build a bridge over the Danube, to be a lasting communication and passage in case of need. No monument of antiquity is more famous in history than this bridge, of which we should form a very high idea, were we at liberty to credit all that Dion Cassius says of it. According to him, Trajan chose one of the narrowest, and consequently one of the deepest and most rapid parts of the river. (It was a little above the ancient town of *Viminacium**, now Zwerin in Lower Hungary.) There he sunk twenty piles of hewn stone, an hundred and fifty feet high and sixty broad, which he crowned with one and twenty arches. Dion Cassius does not say whether those arches were of stone or wood. The distance between each pile was an hundred and seventy feet; which, added to the width of the piles, makes the length of the bridge four thousand seven hundred and seventy Roman feet, or upwards of seven hundred and twenty-one fathoms of our measure. This bridge was defended by a strong fortress on each side of the river.

Dion Cassius admires the magnificence of this work, which he extols beyond all Trajan's other buildings, as by much the most difficult and expensive. He might have admired too the dispatch with

* Near Fetislau, on the right hand side of the Danube, and Zwerin on the left, four small leagues above Ruszava, or Orsova. Viminacium was on the right hand side of the Danube, just where that river forms an elbow over against Vi-palanka. The spot is now called Ram, and some remains of ancient buildings are seen there to this day. I am indebted to M. d'Anville for these positions.

with which it was finished, for his account seems to imply its being built in one campaign, viz. in the year 855, and that Trajan marched his army over it the next year.

Ant. Expl. Vol. IV. Part II. p. 185.

Two circumstances, one of which is collected from Trajan's column, and the other from Count Marsigli's observations made on the spot, lessen our admiration, but at the same time make us amends by a greater degree of probability. We find by Trajan's column, on which his bridge over the Danube is represented, that it consisted of only two stone arches, and that all the rest was wood-work well and boldly executed. Count Marsigli, who declares he examined the spot where the bridge once stood with great care, and saw the piles still subsisting, says the Danube is so far from being deep in summer, that there could be no manner of difficulty in sinking stone-piles, especially in a country where there was such plenty of materials. He adds, that the bridge called the *Pont St Esprit*, over the Rhône, is infinitely superior to it in all respects.

Theat. Antiq. Scallenger. T. II. p. 989.

Decebalus conquered, and, in danger of being taken, kills himself. A. R. 856. *Dio.*

Trajan entered the enemy's country, and carried on the war with equal caution and activity. He hurried nothing, nor ventured any step without mature deliberation; always taking time to consider and make the most of his advantage, which he pursued with care and prudence, till at length he forced the royal city of Decebalus, and subdued the whole country. The Dacian king having no longer a single place left to retire to, and fearing to be taken alive, killed himself out of despair and rage. His head was sent to Rome.

This is all that the abbreviator of Dion Cassius has thought proper to let us know of this war, which certainly was a very important one. Instead of acquainting us with Trajan's plan, and the manner in which he carried it into execution, or saying what his particular views were, how connected, and how one success paved the way for another, he tells us a trifling story

story of a soldier, who, being wounded in battle, retired to the camp, and there finding that his wound was mortal, returned to the field of battle, to spend the remainder of his life in the service of his prince and country. The action was undoubtedly fine; but a proper account of the whole plan and management of the war would have been much more interesting and instructive.

His hidden treasures discovered.

Decebalus hit upon a new invention to secure his treasures. Turning the course of the river Sargætia *, which washed the walls of his capital city, into another channel, he dug down into the bed of the river, and there built a stone vault, into which he carried his money, jewels, and such valuable effects as could not be hurt by the dampness of the place. He then closed the vault, covered it again with mud and slime, and let in the waters as before. As to his furniture, or such of it at least as was of value, rich stuffs, and other such like things, all that was carried to private and remote places under ground. The more effectually to secure the whole, and put it out of the power of any man to divulge his secret, he was barbarous enough to have every one killed that had been employed in assisting him. After his death, a Dacian nobleman called Bicilis, whom he had intrusted with his secret, being taken prisoner by the Romans, told them what I have now related. Trajan ordered the treasures to be searched for. They were found, and paid him amply for all the expenses of the war †.

Colonies established by Trajan in Dacia and the neigh-

Thus was Dacia reduced into a Roman province; the thing Trajan had so often wished for. His next care was to improve and fortify his conquest, the

* The Hungarians now call this river Strel, and the Germans Istrig.

† Lazius, quoted by Fabretti, (de Col. Traj. c. 8.) says, some fishermen employed on the river Istrig, towards the middle of the sixteenth century, found some remains of those treasures which had escaped Trajan.

bouring provinces. *Tillem.*

extent of which was considerable, not less, according to Eutropius, than a thousand times a thousand paces, in other words, three hundred leagues in circumference. But that vast tract of land, when it came into his possession, was in a manner desolate and laid waste by war. Trajan repeopled it with inhabitants from every corner of the Roman world. The chief of the colonies he established there was Zarmisegethusa, the ancient capital of Decebalus's kingdom, to which Trajan gave his own name, calling it *Ulpia Trajana.* We find, too, in Thrace and Mœsia, provinces bordering on Dacia, cities built or enlarged by this emperor, which we may justly look upon as monuments of his care to preserve the conquest he had made. History makes mention, among others, of a Nicopolis, or *City of Victory*, a Marcianopolis, and a Plotinopolis, so called on account of Marciana and Plotina, the one sister, and the other wife, to Trajan.

Trajan's second triumph. *Plin. Ep. VIII. 4. Dio.*

On his return to Rome, he triumphed a second time for his victories over the Dacians, and gave the people games and entertainments on that occasion during an hundred and twenty-three days. Those games seem to have consisted chiefly in combats of gladiators, and fights against wild beasts. Dion Cassius says that no less than ten thousand gladiators fought, and that eleven thousand wild beasts were killed.

Trajan gained so much honour by his victories over the Dacians, that he received embassies from the most remote and barbarous nations, and particularly from the Indians, who sent to congratulate him on the occasion. A famous monument of those victories is still subsisting; I mean Trajan's pillar, on which his most remarkable exploits in both his wars against the Dacians are represented in *basso-relievo.* Ciacconius and Fabretti have taken great pains to explain them fully. The victor himself wrote a history of them, if we may

credit

credit a quotation of Priscian; but, in reality, he was so little used to letters, that one can hardly think he ever turned author. It seems much more reasonable to imagine that somebody wrote for him, and gave him the honour of the performance. Trajan was, without doubt, capable of furnishing the materials; and, indeed, none could do it better; but he can hardly be thought to have known how to arrange and connect them properly. *Priscian. l. VI.*

Whilst he was busied in extending the boundaries of the empire beyond the Danube, Palma, one of his lieutenants, who commanded the legions in Syria, subdued Arabia Petræa, and reduced it to a Roman province. That was but a fore-runner of the victories Trajan was to gain soon after in person in the East. Arabia Petræa subdued by Palma.

Though his stay in Rome, between the end of the Dacian war and the beginning of the Parthian, was not long, he distinguished himself in that short time by occupations worthy of a great prince. It was then, according to Dion Cassius, that he made a noble causeway quite across the Pomptine marshes. An immense labour, but ineffectual; for, notwithstanding the repeated attempts of the Romans to drain those marshes, or make them passable at least, nature, more powerful than all the art of man, baffled their endeavours, and the fens still subsist. Trajan likewise called in all the old light coin of the empire, and melted it down. Trajan's occupations during his abode in Rome.

The magnificent square which bears his name was begun about this time.

A conspiracy that was formed against him, gave him a fair opportunity to display his clemency. Crassus, who was at the head of it, (not Calpurnius Crassus, author of a conspiracy against Nerva,) was referred by the prince to the judgment of the senate, and only condemned to exile, where he spent the remainder of his days in peace and Crassus conspires against him, and is only banished for it.

Spart. Adr. quiet, and was alive when Adrian came to the throne.

Trajan makes war against the Parthians, and goes into the East. *Dio.*

A man of Trajan's active spirit could not be confined to the narrow bounds of peace. He was passionately fond of war; and, as he had no further room to wage it in the West, he turned his eyes towards the Parthians and the East. Armenia offered him the pretence he wanted.

We are at a loss to say what passed in that country after Tiridates's receiving the crown of Armenia from Nero's hand. At the time I am speaking of, Exedarus was on the throne, in virtue of an investiture given him by Chosroës, then king of Parthia. Trajan complained of it as an infringement of the rights of the Roman empire, an insult for which he was resolved to have satisfaction, or, rather, which he was glad to make a handle of to aggrandize himself; for his design was not to give the crown of Armenia to another prince, as his predecessors had done, but to make a conquest of the kingdom, and join it to his own states. To that end, it was necessary to have a war with Parthia; an enterprise by so much the more pleasing to him, as he flattered himself he should triumph over a nation which had till then maintained a kind of equality with the Romans. He was the less dubious of success, as the Parthians were at that time weakened by intestine broils, which could not but give a great advantage to whoever should attack them in that situation.

The origin and circumstance of those broils have not come to our knowledge; nor have we indeed any certain account of the succession of the kings of Parthia from Vologeses to Chosroës. We find an Artabanes king of that country in Titus's time. Pacorus was on the throne towards the beginning of Trajan's reign. Chosroës and Parthamasiris, of whom we shall soon have occasion to speak, were

sons

sons * of Pacorus. Our authors say nothing further of the state of affairs in the East, when Trajan set out from Rome to make war there, which, M. de Tillemont thinks, was in the month of October, in the year of Rome 857.

As fond as Trajan was of arms, he was unwilling to be thought either violent or unjust; and accordingly he seems to have tried what could be done by negotiation, before he had recourse to force. He represented to Chosroës, that he had no right to dispose of the crown of Armenia, and complained of it as an intrusion on the rights of the Roman people. The answer he received was as proud and haughty as he could wish, and left him at liberty to take what satisfaction he thought proper. Accordingly he prepared all things necessary for a war of that importance, and resolved to manage it in person.

He was met at Athens by an embassy from Chosroës, who began to think differently when he saw the danger near him. The Parthian king sent him presents, desired his friendship, and informed him, that finding Exedarus was not agreeable either to the Romans or the Parthians, he had deposed him; and begged Trajan would grant his brother Parthamasiris the investiture of the kingdom of Armenia, as Nero had done to Tiridates.

Trajan could not perhaps well have rejected these proposals, had they been made at first; but they came too late. He had already taken steps towards a war, and thought he had a right not to recede. The answer he returned Chosroës by his ambassadors was, that deeds, and not words, were the proper proofs of friendship; that he should soon be in

* The text of Dion Cassius, p 778 of the Wechel edition, says so positively. It is true Parthamasiris is called Chosroës's nephew in the very next page; but that may easily be imputed to a mistake in the copyist, who wrote ἀδελφιδῶν instead of ἀδελφοῦ.

37157

Syria himself, and see the real state of affairs, in consequence of which he should do what to him should seem most proper.

Armenia conquered by Trajan, and made a Roman province. A. R. 858.

What seemed most proper to him, or what at least pleased him most, was war. The success proved greater than he could have expected. Every thing gave way before him; cities threw open their gates, and the petty kings and satraps of those parts met him with presents, declared their readiness to obey his commands, and acknowledged him the arbiter of their fate. All Armenia was soon subdued, and Parthamasiris, after defending himself a while, had recourse to submission on the terms before proposed to Trajan.

He wrote the emperor a letter, wherein he styled himself king, but received no answer to it. Finding by that, that he must lay aside his title, he omitted it in a second letter, the purport of which was, to desire a conference with M. Junius, governor of Cappadocia. Trajan sent him Junius's son; but in the mean time went on, and extended his conquests. The abbreviator of Dion Cassius does not tell us what passed between Parthamasiris and the Roman deputy. All we know is, that the Parthian prince took a bold step, but miscarried in it.

He went to the Roman camp near Elegia, a town in Armenia, without any other safeguard than his high opinion of Trajan's generosity, which, he doubted not, he should find equal to his utmost wishes. He found the emperor seated on his tribunal, and, after saluting him, took off his diadem and set it at Trajan's feet, standing all the while before him in silence, and expecting every moment that the crown would be returned him. The army in whose presence this passed, shouted with joy, and proclaimed Trajan *Imperator*, thinking a submission of that kind from one of the Arsacidæ, from the son and brother of a Parthian king, reduced to appear before them

as

as a captive, more glorious than any victory purchased at the expense of blood. Parthamasiris was alarmed at the noise they made; and looking upon their shouts as an insulting menace aimed at him, turned round to see which way he could escape. Finding every passage barred, he addressed himself to Trajan, and desired a private audience, which was granted. Trajan took him into his tent, heard him, but refused all he asked. Parthamasiris, confused and driven to despair, left both the tent and camp.

One would think that Trajan, who neither intended to keep him, nor to grant what he wanted, might at least have let him go quietly. He thought otherwise; and was willing the whole army should know his answer to the Parthian prince. Accordingly he ordered a party of his men to follow, and bring him back; after which, seating himself again on his tribunal, he bade him speak, that all might hear what he had to say.

Parthamasiris was incensed at this usage, and knew not what the event might be. Resentment and indignation got the better of him; he spared neither reproaches nor complaints, and protested loudly against such unjust violence. "I have not "yet been conquered by you," said he, "nor am "I your prisoner. I came here voluntarily, in hopes "of meeting with such treatment as my birth en- "titles me to, and of receiving the crown of Ar- "menia from you, as Tiridates received it from "Nero." Trajan's answer was, that Armenia should not be given to any man; that it belonged to the Romans, and should be governed by a Roman magistrate; but that he, Parthamasiris, made himself uneasy about his liberty without cause, for he might depart and go wherever he thought proper. The Parthian prince retired with his countrymen; but the Armenians were ordered to stay, as subjects of the empire.

Parthamasiris, finding he could not keep his king-
Eutrop. dom, resolved at least to die like a king. He did all that man could do; fought it out to the last, though with infinite disadvantage, and by his death left the Romans possessors of Armenia.

If Trajan had aimed at nothing further than barely avenging the Roman empire against the Parthians, he then had room to be content and satisfied; but his passion for war and conquest still prevailed. Armenia subdued tempted him to go further on, and to try his fortune against the Parthians themselves. Accordingly he entered Mesopotamia, and drew near Edessa, after leaving garrisons in the chief places he had conquered.

Conquest of Mesopotamia. A. R. 859. Abgarus king of Edessa, following the footsteps of his predecessors of the same name, fluctuated till then between the Romans and Parthians. His inclination led him to favour the latter; but as he was too weak to think of resisting the former, he always sent presents to Trajan, without going in person to him. When he saw the Roman army in his country, he found he could temporise no longer, and thought himself well off in obtaining pardon for his past tergiversations by his present submission. A circumstance that pleaded strongly for him, to the shame of Trajan, was the youth and beauty of his son Arbandes. Him he employed to open the way for a favourable reception; and after obtaining a promise that he should be treated as a friend, went out to meet the emperor, and received him in his palace, where he gave him an entertainment, during which Arbandes danced before him, after the manner of the Eastern barbarians.

Trajan conquered Mesopotamia. The cities of Batnæ, Singares, and Nisibis, are particularly said to have been reduced by dint of arms. This is all we know with any certainty of the Roman exploits in that country. Providence seems purposely to have

have ordered it so, that Trajan's actions should be buried in a degree of oblivion, equal to [illegible] unbounded desire of making a bustle in the [illegible] Roman emperor ever was a greater warrior [illegible] any one add more important conquests to the pire. Numbers of authors have written his histor[illegible] but they are all lost except a few shapeless fr[illegible] ments of Dion Cassius, and the slender abridgments of Eutropius and Aurelius Victor. The latter tells us that Chosroës was forced to give hostages to Trajan; from whence we may infer that a treaty was concluded, in consequence of which the war was ended, or at least suspended for a time. The senate gave the conqueror the surname of *Parthicus*.

Arabia Petræa subdued, and made a Roman province. *Aurel. Marc. l. XIV.*

Arabia Petræa became a Roman province about this time. It was conquered by Cornelius Palma, as I before observed; but repeated revolts obliged Trajan to carry the war thither again in person. He subdued the turbulent inhabitants, and forced them to receive a Roman governor, and to obey him.

Trajan maintains a proper discipline among his troops, as much by his own example as by his orders.

During the whole war of which I have been speaking, Trajan constantly kept up the strictest discipline, not only by his care and vigilance, but also by his own example. He marched on foot at the head of the standards, forded rivers like the meanest soldier in his army, and went from rank to rank to see if all was right, and prevent their straggling. Dion Cassius mentions a circumstance, which, if I might venture to give my opinion, I should think dangerous on many occasions. He says, Trajan frequently set about a false alarm, purposely to keep his troops alert and on their guard.

Lusius Quietus, by birth a Mauritanian, one of Trajan's best generals. *Dio. ab. Val.*

Trajan's chief, or rather his only general that history takes notice of in this brilliant expedition, was Lusius Quietus, who behaved so well before in the Dacian war. He was a native of Mauritania, entered the army as a private man in the horse, and rose by dint of merit to be commander-in-chief of

all

all the auxiliary forces of his nation in the Roman service. He was convicted of malversation, and dismissed with ignominy. Notwithstanding that, when Trajan first undertook the Dacian war, Lusius offered him his services, and they were accepted. He soon distinguished himself in so brave a manner, as not only to wipe off all former imputations, but to acquire Trajan's esteem and confidence. He followed that emperor to the East, and was the man that took the city of Singares. Trajan employed him as long as he lived; made him pretor, and afterwards consul; and some say that he intended to name him his successor in the empire.

Themist.

Barbarous nations on the north of Armenia, subdued by Trajan. *Eutrop. Themist.*

The peace or truce concluded with the Parthians was probably what gave Trajan leisure to turn his ambitious views towards the barbarous nations that dwelt north of Armenia, between the Euxine and the Caspian seas. He gave the Albanians a king, and forced the sovereigns of Iberia and Colchos to submit and own his power. Lusius subdued the Mardi for him; in short, the whole Eastern coast of the Euxine sea, as far as Sebastopolis or Dioscurias, acknowledged his laws. That this was the case appears from Arrian, who tells us that all that country obeyed the Romans, or kings dependent on, and vassals of the Romans, in Adrian's time. Now, Adrian succeeded Trajan, and made no new conquests.

Arr. Perip. Ponti.

Trajan's return to Rome, which he leaves again towards the year 856, to renew the war against the Parthians *Tillem. Traj.* 17. 21. and 22.

We cannot say exactly how much of Trajan's time was taken up by these great exploits in the East. It is probable that he returned to Rome when they were over; for he can hardly be supposed to have spent near twelve years, viz. from his first departure in 857 to his death, which happened in 868, without visiting his capital. And yet no author speaks of his return; nor can any reason be assigned why, if he did return to Rome, he did not triumph for so many glorious victories over the Parthians.

thians. These difficulties, great as they are, seem, however, cleared up, or at least his return proved, by medals yet extant; for which reason, we venture to say, some space of time intervened between Trajan's first exploits against the Parthians and his last, of which we are yet to speak. What he did during that space, is unknown to us; nor can we say what were the motives that induced him to return again to the East. On the whole, however, we think we may safely lay it down as a fact, as M. de Tillemont does, that he set out again from Rome about the year 865, and got to Antioch time enough to be in great danger from a violent earthquake which happened there in January 866.

Violent earthquake at Antioch. A. R. 866. *Eus. Chron. Dio.*

Asia, Greece, and Galatia, had already suffered at different times by a like misfortune since Trajan was on the throne. But the disaster I am now speaking of was far more fatal than theirs. The emperor's being at Antioch of course brought the troops thither, together with ambassadors and their trains, an infinite number of private men who had business at court, merchants and others; so that the misfortune of one city became that of the whole Roman empire. The shocks, accompanied with dreadful peals of thunder, raging storms of wind, and subterraneous fires, were so violent, that every building was shaken to the foundation, and most of them were thrown down. Trajan escaped with difficulty through a window of the room where he then was, getting only some slight bruises. Dion Cassius, who always delights in the marvellous, says, a figure of uncommon size and strength delivered heaven's favourite prince from the danger he was in. The truth is, that he escaped, and got to the Hippodromes, a place remote from all buildings, where he staid till the earthquake was over. The effects of it were felt a great way round, but Antioch was the centre and spot that suffered most. Our historian,

rian, without saying positively how many people perished in it, leaves us to judge that the number must have been immense. He mentions nobody in particular, except Pedo, who was then consul. When all was calm again, the ruins were turned up to see if any were alive under them that could yet be assisted. Only two children were found in that situation, with the mother of one of them, who had supported herself and child with her own milk. The other was found holding its dead mother.

Trajan consults the oracle of Heliopolis, and receives an enigmatical answer. *Macrob. Sat. l. 23.*

Before Trajan took the field, his friends pressed him strongly to consult the famous oracle of Heliopolis in Phœnicia, to know the event of the war he was going to undertake. Trajan was far from being credulous, and therefore resolved to make a trial of the god's skill before he trusted him. To that end, he sent him a piece of blank paper sealed up, desiring his answer to the contents. The priests of all those oracles knew extremely well how to open a letter, and seal it up again, so as not to be perceived. The answer Trajan received was another piece of blank paper. He had no suspicion of the fraud, and from that moment concluded the oracle divine; in consequence whereof he sent another paper, sealed as the former, in which he desired seriously to know what was to be his fate, and whether he should return to Rome victor of the Parthians. The god was not able to resolve that question; but, however, he extricated himself by sending in return an enigmatical symbol, susceptible of a thousand different interpretations, a broken vine-branch. Men did not fail to justify the oracle after the event, easily finding in it then a clear prediction of the emperor's death. The broken twig, said they, denoted the prince's body burnt to ashes, and carried to Rome in that condition.

Trajan did not dream of any such interpretation; but, on the contrary, full of hopes, and pleasing ideas

ideas of success, he took the field about the beginning of spring, and marched towards Adiabenum, a part of Assyria. The river Tigris was to be passed, and consequently a bridge * thrown over it, before he could enter that country. The task was difficult, for want of proper timber; but Trajan supplied that deficiency, by ordering a sufficient number of boats to be built in the forests about Nisibis, in such manner that they could be taken to pieces, and put together again, whenever he pleased. Those pieces were loaded on carriages, and conveyed to the river-side over-against Cordyænum, where they were joined together properly. Other difficulties still arose from the barbarians, who seemed determined, if possible, to prevent his going on with the work, and molested the Romans employed in it to the utmost of their power. But the first boats that were ready being launched, and filled with archers and other troops, soon cooled their courage, and kept them at a distance. Other boats tried to pass above and below them, and more were finished in the mean time. Nothing could have terrified the barbarians more than the sight of such a multitude of boats in a country where no wood grew. They fled, and Trajan, having finished his bridge without further interruption, passed the Tigris.

Trajan throws a bridge of boats over the Tigris.

We find in a fragment of an † ancient author, an account of the manner in which the Romans built their bridges of boats. Nothing could be more simple. The boats intended for that purpose were very wide; they were fastened to the shore a little

The Roman method of building a bridge of boats. *Apud Suidam in Ζευγμα.*

* The text of Dion Cassius does not absolutely say that Trajan threw a bridge over the Tigris, nor does it say the contrary, but leaves great room to think he did; and indeed he could not otherwise have passed that river so easily.

† According to Henry de Valois, that fragment belongs to Dion Cassius. His opinion is probable, but not supported with certainty.

little above the place where the bridge was designed to be. At a signal given, one of them was let loose, and fell down the river with the stream, along the shore they were in possession of. When the boat came to the proper place, a basket full of stones, tied to a cable end, was thrown over by way of anchor, and fixed it there. The end towards the water being thus secured, that next the land was fastened close with strong ropes, after which planks were laid from the shore to the boat. That done, the middle of the boat was filled up from end to end with materials that served for ballast, and at the same time formed a smooth and solid foundation to walk over. The rest of the work was but a repetition of the same thing. A second boat was set afloat and fastened to the first, then a third, and so on till they reached the opposite shore. The last boat, which was that next the enemy's side, had a door-way, and was armed with towers, catapults, and other engines of war.

Trajan conquers Assyria. *Dio.*

Trajan, having passed the Tigris with the help of such a bridge, subdued Adiabenum and all Assyria. It was no small pleasure to him to tread in the footsteps of Alexander, and reduce the cities of Arbela and Gangamela, so famous in the history of the Macedonian conqueror.

He returns towards Babylon.

Trajan turned back after the conquest of Assyria, repassed the Tigris, and marched towards Babylon, without meeting any thing to stop him. The Parthian power was at that time at a low ebb, owing to their intestine broils which had long set them at variance with each other, and still raged with such violence, that even the presence of so formidable an enemy could not allay them. Trajan rather travelled than made war. He visited the source of the bitumen that was used in building the walls of Babylon. Dion Cassius describes that source as a kind of well, from the mouth of which a deadly vapour exhaled,

exhaled, fatal to all that came near it, either man or beast. Nature, says he, wisely confined that pestiferous exhalation to a narrow space; for, had it risen to any height, or extended far, the country round about must of necessity have been uninhabited.

Trajan, finding how weak the Parthians were, resolved to march against their capital, Ctesiphon. To that end the Tigris was to be passed again, and a new bridge made. His design was to convey all necessary materials through the Naarmalcha, an old canal dug by the kings of Babylon, to receive part of the waters of the Euphrates, and to join it by a new canal to that part of the Tigris where he intended making his bridge. The work was accordingly begun, and pretty far advanced, when it was observed, that the level of the Euphrates in that place, being much higher than that of the Tigris, a communication between those two rivers might drain the former so as to render its navigation impracticable. The work was therefore given over, and the timber for the bridge ordered to be carried by land.

Trajan takes the cities of Ctesiphon and Susa.

Cellar. Geogr. Ant. III. 16.

To appear before the walls of Ctesiphon, and take it, was but one work with Trajan. Susa, too, formerly the seat of the Persian empire, submitted without delay. It was probably in one of those two cities that he made Chosroës's daughter prisoner, and took the throne of gold on which the kings of Parthia received the homage of their subjects. The surname of *Parthicus* was confirmed to him in consequence of this conquest, and the senate decreed him not one, but several triumphs; Dion Cassius says, as many as he pleased; which, if true, was a low and wretched piece of flattery indeed; and, if calculated to suit his taste, indicates a love of vanity and ostentation ill becoming so great a prince as Trajan.

Lucian Philop.

Spart. Ad c. 13.

Dio.

The

Prosperity seems to have turned his brain.

The schemes he formed and executed after the taking of Ctesiphon, seem but too strongly to confirm that suspicion, and give room to think prosperity made him giddy, and almost turned his brain. If ambition could be satisfied, he had surely abundant reason to be content. The Parthians, so often victorious before, and in whose empire the Romans had never been able to get footing till he headed them, were reduced to a low ebb by the force of his arms, and had already lost three great provinces, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria. Prudence, without doubt, required that his next care should be to secure those conquests, less difficult to make than keep. He should have accustomed them by degrees to the jurisdiction of the Romans, have brought them over to their manners, and tried to root out the spirit of independence, which made them ready to revolt the moment an opportunity should offer. Instead of that, Trajan was bent on further conquests, and vainly thought of penetrating to the ocean.

He falls down the Tigris, crosses the Persian gulph, and enters the ocean. A. R. 867.

He fell down the Tigris, and took the island of Mesænum, at the mouth of that river. There he was in danger from the rapidity of the stream, the meeting of the tides, and a storm. Not warned by that, he crossed the whole length of the Persian gulph, passed by the isle of Ormus, and advanced to the main sea. Seeing a ship there ready to sail for the Indies, he could not help saying, "If I was "younger, I would certainly go fight the Indians." He fell upon Arabia Fœlix, laid the coast waste, and, with the help of his fleet, took a town formerly called Arabia, now famous under the name of Aden, to the west on this side of the streights of Babelmandel †. This is probably the expedition Eutropius

He takes a sea-port on the south coast of Arabia Fœlix.

* *Arr. Peripl. Erythr.*

* I suppose the Periplus of the Red Sea, that goes under the name of Arrian, to be really his, though the learned are not agreed about it.

† According to M. de Tillemont, it was owing to Trajan's conquests in Arabia that a custom-house was erected on the

Eutropius means, when he speaks of a fleet intended by Trajan to attack the coasts of India; not distinguishing, as he should have done, betwixt India and Arabia.

He envies Alexander his great renown.

Trajan was not mistaken. He envied the renown and happiness of Alexander, who extended his conquests to the Indies; but, however, comforted himself with his exploits in Arabia Fœlix, where Alexander never penetrated, and gloried in having gone beyond the limits of that great conqueror. He wrote to the senate in that style, filling up his letters with the names of barbarous and unknown nations, whom he boasted of having conquered. The senators, on their side, were so amazed to see such a heap of names they had never before heard of, many of which they knew not how to pronounce, thought they could never praise him as much as he deserved, nor give him titles of honour and triumphal arches enough. Vast preparations were made to receive him with the utmost magnificence whenever he should return to Rome; but Providence ordained otherwise.

He visits the ruins of Babylon.

Trajan's vanity being satisfied by his voyage to the ocean, he returned to the mouth of the Tigris, and went up that river. From thence he crossed over to the Euphrates, in order to visit the famous city of Babylon, once the queen of the East. He found it in the desolate condition foretold by the prophets, when in its greatest glory. Nothing remained of that proud city but the ruins and feeble

western coast of the Red sea, at a place called White Burgh, where, says Arrian, (Peripl. Erythr.) a centurion was sent with a certain number of soldiers, to collect a duty of 25 per cent. on all goods imported there. But it seems more natural to think it was by the way of Egypt that the Romans, who had long been masters of that country, possessed themselves of White Burgh, by crossing the breadth only of the Red sea, which in that place is not above two or three days' sail.

traces of what it once was. His veneration for Alexander was so great, that he offered sacrifices to the memory of that hero in the house where he died. The news he received, whilst busied with such trivial cares, was a sufficient punishment for his vanity, and convinced him of the bad effects of his long and imprudent absence.

The countries lately conquered, rebel. Trajan subdues them again.

All his conquests tottered, and had already shaken off the yoke. The troops that guarded them were driven away or cut to pieces, and the whole war was to be commenced again. Trajan sent Lusius Quietus on one side, and Maximus on the other, to chastise the rebels. The latter, who seems to be the same that was of great service to Trajan in the Dacian war, was not equally successful in this. He was defeated and killed in battle. Lusius proved more fortunate, or more experienced. He forced the city of Edessa, which he destroyed and burnt. Selecucia was reduced by Erucius Clarus and Julius Alexander.

He gives the Parthians a king.

By these advantages the Romans regained their ascendant over the late subjected countries; and Trajan, warned by the danger he had been in of loosing all his conquests, found it necessary to set bounds to his vast desires, which seem at first to have been the absolute extinction of the Parthian empire, and to make all its inhabitants immediately subservient to his laws. Finding that impracticable, he contented himself with giving them a king of his own choosing.

Chosroës was yet alive, a wanderer and a fugitive; but Trajan did not think it his interest to give the crown to a prince who never would have looked upon it as a favour done him by the Romans, but as his right of inheritance. He therefore chose Parthamespates, of whom we know nothing more than that he was made king, and enthroned with great magnificence. Trajan went to Ctesiphon, where he

he assembled all the Romans and Parthians in the city and country round about, and, from a tribunal erected for that purpose, made a pompous speech in praise of his own great exploits, declared Parthamespates king of Parthia, and placed the diadem on his head.

Trajan undertakes the siege of Atra, but is forced to raise it.

The city of Atra *, inhabited by Arabians, and not far distant from the Upper Tigris, between that river and Nisibis, still held out. Trajan, resolving to reduce it, went in person and laid siege to it. He miscarried in the attempt, and this campaign, the last he ever made, was likewise the most unfortunate.

Atra, though neither great nor rich, was defended by its situation in the midst of a desert, where little water was to be found, and that bad; and no wood or forage. The heat of the sun was excessive in that arid plain, and served as a further defence to the besieged. Notwithstanding these difficulties, Trajan's skill, and the valour of his victorious army, pushed on the siege with great success at first, and made a breach in the walls; but when they came to the assault, they were repulsed with loss. He tried in vain to rally his shattered troops; nothing could prevent or stop their flight, and it was with difficulty he himself escaped being killed or wounded. He had purposely laid aside all marks of distinction, that he might not be known; but his grey hairs and majestic mien betrayed him to some of his enemies, who shot at him, and killed a horseman close by his side. To complete his misfortune, a violent storm of rain, hail, thunder, and

* The situation of Atra admits of some difficulty. I abide by the authority of Ammianus Marcellinus, who was on the spot. Dion Cassius places it in Arabia; which can admit of no other meaning than what I have said in the text, that it was inhabited by Arabians. See Cellar. Geogr. Ant. III. 15.

lightning, came on, and immense quantities of flies infected the provisions and drink of his army. There was no possibility of resisting. He raised the siege, retired to the territories of the empire in Syria, and died soon after. But before we speak of his death, it may not be improper to give some account of the furious commotions of the Jews, which happened at the same time as those of the other nations I have been speaking of, or rather somewhat earlier.

Rebellions and disasters of the Jews in Cyrene, Egypt, Cyprus, and Mesopotamia. *Dio. et Euc. Hist. Eccl. IV. 2.*

The terror with which the Jews were struck, when Titus made himself master of their holy city Jerusalem, had had time to wear off in a space of nearly fifty years that had past since that dire calamity; and all they now complained of was the heavy yoke laid on them, contrary, in their opinions, to the express promises and predictions of the prophets. The rebellion began with those of Cyrene, who, when they saw the emperor was at a great distance, and the forces of the empire busied in the East, thought the time come when they were to recover their liberty. They rose and ran to arms, being headed, according to Dion Cassius, by one Andrew, in the year of Rome 866, and committed unheard-of outrages. Not content with barely killing the Greeks and Romans in the midst of whom they dwelt, they put them to the greatest tortures that could possibly be devised, sawing some of them asunder length-ways, exposing others to wild beasts, and forcing others again to fight as gladiators. Their rage and cruelty was far greater than that of the most savage creatures; for they devoured their flesh, rubbed their bodies over with their blood, as if it had been an oil or perfume, flead them alive, and covered themselves with their skins. Dion Cassius is the writer who gives us these horrid accounts of them; but I own I can hardly credit him; especially as Eusebius, a much more judicious author, says no such thing. I doubt, too, whether Dion

Dion Cassius does not exaggerate the number of those the Jews put to death, for he reckons them at no less than two hundred and twenty thousand in the district of Cyrene only, and two hundred and forty thousand in the island of Cyprus, where the rebellion broke out likewise.

However that may be, Lupus, prefect of Egypt, endeavouring to chastise the rebels of Cyrene, with the troops under his command, was beaten, and forced to shut himself up in Alexandria, where he took revenge on the Jews of that great city, numbers of whom he killed, and made the rest slaves.

It cannot, indeed, be so properly called revenge as a necessary precaution; for the Jews of Alexandria were as deeply concerned in the plot as those of Cyrene, who, destitute of assistance from their brethren, and of themselves too weak to besiege the capital of Egypt, overran the flat country, and committed all sorts of outrages and hostilities. They had then a king, Lucua, at their head, according to Eusebius.

The emperor, being informed of these disturbances, sent Martius Turbo into Egypt, with a sea and land force of horse and foot. Though Turbo was an excellent officer, and a man of indefatigable activity, it was not without difficulty that he stifled the rebellion. It cost him a great deal of time, and several battles. At last, however, he prevailed, and retaliated on the Jews all the mischiefs they had done in Cyrene and in Egypt.

It is probable that Turbo pacified Cyprus too, where the Jews, as I before said, did infinite hurt. They had already destroyed the city of Salaminum, *Eus. Chron.* and murdered all the inhabitants of it. History does not say in what manner they were punished for their excessive cruelties, but doubtless they met with the reward they well deserved. All we know is, that they were extirpated from the whole island;

and Dion Cassius assures us, that in his time no Jew was suffered to dwell, or even set his foot, within the island of Cyprus. Even such as were shipwrecked, or driven on the coast by storms, were put to death without mercy.

Mesopotamia had been full of Jews for many ages past. Trajan suspected them, and not unjustly, of harbouring the same schemes as their brethren of Egypt and Cyrene. He therefore ordered Lusius Quietus to clear the province of them, for so Eusebius expresses it. The Jews defended themselves, and fought a battle, in which they were defeated. Lusius exterminated a vast number of them, and behaved so well, that Trajan rewarded him with the government of Palestine.

Trajan falls sick. A. R. 868. *Dio.*

Trajan, as I said before, retired to Syria, where he spent the winter. He purposed returning to Mesopotamia in the spring, to establish the Roman jurisdiction thoroughly in that country, the inhabitants of which seemed to bear the yoke with reluctance. But illness prevented his design. He was seized with an apoplectic fit, and a palsy ensued, which reduced him to a low and languishing condition. He resolved, therefore, to return towards Rome, where the senate invited him to come and taste the repose his labours and exploits justly entitled him to. He left his army in Syria, and gave the command of it to Adrian.

Aurel. Vict.

Dio.

Loss of his conquests in the East.

Adrian had neither zeal, nor perhaps capacity enough, to go on with so difficult a war. The conqueror's absence was the loss of all his conquests. The Parthians, disdaining the king Trajan had given them, soon deposed him, set up their old form of government and their own laws, and recalled Chosroës, whom the Romans had dethroned. Armenia and Mesopotamia returned to their old masters, and all Trajan's great and glorious exploits vanished at once; so that all the Romans got

in

in return for the immense expenses they had been at, the blood they had lost, and the dangers to which they had been exposed, was the shameful imputation of having missed their aim.

Trajan's illness lasted several months, and, as he had no child, gave such as had an eye to the empire time to set all their engines to work. None had a fairer claim to it than his countryman and near relation Adrian, already elevated to so high a pitch, that the throne only was above him. He was questor, as I before observed, in Trajan's fourth consulship, in the year of Rome 852; tribune of the people four years after, viz. in 856; pretor in 858; substituted consul in 860; and, lastly, appointed consul in ordinary, and commander-in-chief in Syria, in the last year of Trajan's reign.

Adrian's schemes and intrigues to make Trajan adopt him. *Spart. Adr.* 2. 3. 4.

Adrian's ambition increased with his rise in the state; and he took care to lay a foundation for it, by courting Trajan's esteem and friendship on all occasions, from the hour of his being adopted by Nerva. The reader may remember the first steps he took with that view. He accompanied Trajan in most of his expeditions; had the command of a legion in the second Dacian war, and behaved so bravely in it, that the emperor made him a present of the diamond Nerva had given him; which Adrian looked upon as a pledge of his future adoption. In the interval between his pretorship and consulship, he was made governor of Lower Pannonia, and discharged the duties of general and of magistrate with equal applause from all. On one hand he curbed the Sarmatians, and maintained the strictest discipline in his army; and, on the other, he kept the emperor's intendants within due bounds, whenever they attempted to exceed their lawful power. The consulship was given him as a reward for his good administration.

Whilst he was in that high office, Licinius Sura, Trajan's most intimate friend and confident, assured him he would certainly be adopted. Adrian concluded he had attained his wish; but Sura dying soon after, he lost his best protector. It is true he succeeded him in a post of high trust, that of secretary to the emperor; for Trajan, though capable enough of doing it, was too indolent, if we credit *Jul. Cæs.* Julian the Apostate, to compose his own speeches and harangues, and made use of Sura to that end, whilst he lived, and after him of Adrian. The grand affair of the adoption was, however, stopped at once, and no more talked of till Trajan's death.

The prince's chief friends were all against it. Besides his brother-in-law Servius, who endeavoured to thwart Adrian from the very first, and to prejudice him in the emperor's esteem, by exposing his conduct and the bad state of his affairs, Palma and Celsus were his avowed enemies. Adrian, finding that the only way to succeed was, to render himself personally agreeable to Trajan, resolved to make that point his study, and to flatter even his vices. Trajan loved drink; Adrian drank with him; nay scrupled not to be subservient to his infamous amours, in performing the meanest offices about the boys the emperor was fond of; currying favour with them, helping them with his own hand to the drugs they used to preserve their beauty and complexion, and doing every low and abject thing he thought would please. But his great resource, without which all the rest would never have availed him, was the favour of the empress Plotina. She protected him on all occasions, brought about his marriage with the emperor's niece, got him a great command in the Parthian war, had him made consul a second time, and, to crown all, when she found it was impossible to prevail on Trajan to adopt him, supplied that defect by fraud and artifice.

Trajan,

Trajan, as I observed before, never loved Adrian; nor did he so much as think of him in all the plans and schemes he revolved in his own mind relating to his successor. Some say he thought of imitating Alexander, who named none at all: but that would have been very unbecoming so good a prince as Trajan, who, as he made the empire happy whilst he lived, could not do less, in justice to mankind, than think of securing that happiness after his death. According to others, he intended writing to the senate, to leave the choice of an emperor, out of a certain number of persons mentioned in his letter, entirely to them. This seems to agree with what Dion Cassius says of Servius, when he tells us, that Trajan, one day at table, desired his company to point him out ten men capable of ruling the empire, and after a short pause, recollecting himself, added, "No, I want but nine, for I have one al-"ready, which is Servius." I observed before, that he once had thoughts of Lusius Quietus, though a foreigner and a Mauritanian. Spartian says he had his eye on Neratius Priscus too, a famous civilian, and that most of the emperor's friends approved his choice. The thing went so far, that Trajan said one day to Priscus, "If fate "takes me away, I recommend the provinces to "you." A remarkable expression! which plainly shows that Trajan looked upon himself as the republic's generalissimo, rather than as a monarch, and that he thought the provinces and armies only under his immediate command.

Trajan had quite different views, and thought not of adopting Adrian.

Dio. Adr.

Spart.

Upon the whole, it is evident that Trajan did not intend to adopt Adrian; and, accordingly, Dion Cassius assures us, on the credit of his father Apronianus, who was governor of the province of Cilicia, where Trajan died, that, in fact, he never was adopted. The whole intrigue was carried on as follows:

Dio. Adr.

Trajan

Trajan dies, and Adrian succeeds him in virtue of a forged adoption. *Dio Traj. et. Adr.*

Trajan, paralytic as he was, and afflicted with a dropsy, the usual consequence of hard drinking, seemed reduced to so low a state, as easily to be wrought upon by those about him; but still he persisted in his resolution not to adopt Adrian. Perhaps, too, the notion he had of the cause of his illness, which he, though without any apparent reason that we know of, imputed to poison, might help him to confirm his distrust of all that approached him. He took shipping, intending to return to Rome by sea; but, on his arrival at Selinontum in Cilicia, had a second * apoplectic fit, of which he died. Plotina, assisted by Tatian, who had been preceptor to Adrian in his youth, was present when her husband died, and let none else come near him. She was by that means at liberty to publish what she pleased; and accordingly she gave out that Trajan had adopted Adrian, and sent notice of it to the senate. What betrayed her was, that the letter was signed by her, and not by Trajan. She might, indeed, as well have counterfeited his hand as she did his voice; for, if any credit can be given to what we are told, she acted a most extraordinary part on this occasion, concealing a man who personated the dying emperor, and, with a faint and feeble voice, declared that he adopted Adrian. To make this seem the more probable, Trajan's death was concealed for some time; so that we cannot say exactly when it happened. All we know is, that Adrian, who was then at Antioch, received the news of his adoption on the ninth of August, and that of Trajan's death on the eleventh.

Thus

* According to Eutropius, Trajan died of a violent purging. I prefer the authority of Dion Cassius, who says he died suddenly; and it must be owned that such a death seems more suitable to the part Plotina acted in trumping up a false adoption.

Thus did that great emperor, that conqueror so renowned, who built bridges over the Danube and the Tigris, subdued Dacia, and reduced the Parthian empire to the very brink of destruction, die, and leave his crown to a man he neither chose nor liked, and who proved no friend to his memory, as we shall see.

Honours done Trajan's memory.

Adrian, however, at first affected an extraordinary regard for his predecessor's memory, and seemed very zealous to pay him all suitable honours. He celebrated his obsequies with great pomp at Selinontum, called Trajanopolis after him. His ashes were sent to Rome in an urn of gold, and carried into the city on a triumphal car, preceded by the senate, with the army following. They were deposited under the famous pillar which he erected in the square he built; and was distinguished from all others by being buried in the city, where none had been entombed before. He was ranked among the gods, and games were instituted to his honour under the name of Parthian games, which, after being regularly kept for several years, were at last disused and forgotten.

Duration of his life and reign.

Trajan lived near sixty-four years, of which he reigned nineteen years, six months, and fifteen days, reckoning to the eleventh of August, the day that Adrian began to reign.

His virtues and his vices.

Trajan was free from every vice immediately detrimental to society, and possessed their opposite virtues in a high degree, such as moderation, clemency, love of justice, plainness and simplicity of manners, and a judicious liberality, supported by a wise and prudent economy. All mankind was happy under his government, and he still enjoys the praise and admiration that were his just due.

I have spoken more than once of his love of wine, so great that, Aurelius Victor tells us, he was obliged to charge his servants not to obey his orders whenever

ever he asked for more after any great entertainment. His debauches against nature will ever be a standing reproach and infamy to him. I will venture also to reckon among his faults his insatiable love of war, his success in which elated him too much, as the reverse he met with struck too great a damp on his last days.

Such is the frailty of human nature, when not assisted from above. No virtue is perfect in this world; and even those we boast of most are often tarnished with the worst of stains.

BOOK XIX.

ANNALS OF ADRIAN.

....QUINTUS NIGER. An. R. 868, of J. C. 117.
C. VIPSTANUS APRONIANUS.

ADRIAN, the 11th of August, receives at Antioch the news of Trajan's death, and is proclaimed emperor by the legions of Syria.

He writes afterwards to the senate to desire a confirmation of what had been done by the troops. They give him the titles belonging to the imperial power.

He goes to Selinonte to pay his last respects to the ashes of Trajan, and returns into Syria.

He makes Tatian, formerly his tutor, the pretorian prefect.

Troubles in different parts of the empire.

Marcus Turbo, being appointed in the room of Lusius Quietus to the government of Palestine, puts the finishing hand to the peace of that country.

Adrian abandons Trajan's conquests over the Parthians, and agrees that the Euphrates should, as formerly, be the boundary of the two empires.

He departs to return to Rome.

IMP. ADRIANUS AUGUSTUS II. An. R. 869, of J. C. 118.
.... FUSCUS SALINATOR.

Adrian passes through Illyria, and comes to Rome.

He

He refuses at first the title of father of his country, which nevertheless he accepts before the end of the year.

Largesses of Adrian.

An. R. 870, of J. C. 119. IMP. ADRIANUS AUGUSTUS III.
.... RUSTICUS.

Adrian returns to Illyria, obtains some advantages over the Sarmatæ and Roxolani, who made incursions into Mœsia, and concludes a peace with them by means of a pension he agrees to pay them.

He makes Martius Turbo prefect of Pannonia and of Dacia.

A conspiracy formed against him by four consular persons, whom the senate punishes with death. One of them was Lusius Quietus. Adrian wishes to have it thought he had no hand in that severe resentment. He returns to Rome.

He discharges all that was owing to the imperial or public treasury. That discharge amounted to nine hundred millions of sesterces.

Adrian shows all possible marks of respect for the senate.

He takes from Tatian the office of pretorian prefect, and chooses Martius Turbo for his successor.

Similis, the pretorian prefect, likewise retires. Septicius Clarus put in his place.

Adrian gives leave to the philosopher Euphrates to put himself to death.

An. R. 871, of J. C. 120. L. CATILIUS SEVERUS II.
T. AURELIUS FULVIUS.

It is believed that the second of these two consuls for this year is he who is afterwards the emperor Titus Antoninus.

Adrian begins his voyages, and goes into Gaul and Germany.

He

He preserves military discipline with steadiness, but without severity.

The cities of Nice and Nicomedia, wasted by an earthquake, are re-established by Adrian's liberality.

M. Annius Verus II. An. R. 875, of J. C. 121.
..... Augur.

The consul Annius Verus is grandfather by the father to Marcus Aurelius.

Adrian goes over to Great Britain. He builds a wall there to stop the incursions of the barbarians from the northern part of the island.

Suetonius's and Septicius Clarus's disgrace.

Sedition in Egypt on account of the ox Apis.

Adrian returns to Gaul, and goes to pass the winter in Spain.

....Acilius Aviola. An. R. 878, of J. C. 123.
....Corellius Pansa.

Adrian rebuilds the temple of Augustus at Terragona.

He passes from thence into Mauritania, where he appeases some commotions, which occasioned his having the honour of a public thanksgiving decreed him.

During the four following years, where we shall only mark the consuls, Adrian visited Greece, Syria, and the East, all Asia Minor, and, returning through Greece, he comes to Sicily, and from thence returned to Rome.

In all the cities and provinces of the empire where he passes, he leaves behind him proofs of his magnificence, by the building or repairing of public works and edifices, and he had great attention to the establishing of order and law. With regard to the

An. R. 873, of J. C. 122. the barbarous kings and nations upon the frontiers of the empire, his scheme was to keep peace, and he succeeded.

An. R. 874, of J. C. 123. Q. Arrius Pætinus.
C. Ventidius Apronianus.

An. R. 875, of J. C. 124. P. Cornelius Scipio.
.. Asiaticus II.
.. Vettius Aquilinus.

An. R. 877, of J. C. 126. M. Annius Verus III.
L. Varius Ambibulus.

Adrian returns to Rome.

Apologies for Christianity presented to the emperor by S. Quadratus and S. Aristidus. A rescript of Adrian favourable to Christians.

An. R. 878, of J. C. 127. Titianus, or perhaps Tatianus.
..... Gallicanus.

We may believe, with great probability, that the first of these two consuls for this year is Tatian, formerly pretorian prefect, who, soon after his promotion to the consulate, was proscribed.

An. R. 879, of J. C. 128. Torquatus Asprenas.
..... Annius Libo.

The second of these consuls for this year was uncle, by the father, to Marcus Aurelius.

An. R. 880, of J. C. 129. P. Juvencius Celsus II.
Q. Julius Balbus.

Juvencius Celsus, consul for this year, was a famous lawyer, whom Adrian often called to his councils.

An

An earthquake in Bithynia. An. R. 880, of J. C. 129.

Adrian renews his voyages to Africa, whence he returns the same year to Rome.

The death of Plotina, Trajan's widow.

The dedication of the temple built by Adrian, to Rome and Venus. An. R. 881, of J. C. 130

The low envy of Adrian against Apollodorus, the architect, whom he puts to death.

Adrian, departing again from Rome, traverses Asia anew, comes to Syria; and in this and the following year he visits Arabia, Palestine, and Egypt.

When in the East, he sends back to Chosroës, king of the Parthians, his daughter, who had been taken by Trajan.

Ser. Octavius Lænas. An. R. 882, of J. C. 131.
Pontianus.
M. Antonius Rufinus.

Adrian in Egypt.

Pompey's burying-place rebuilt.

Antinous's death, whom Adrian is not ashamed to make a god.

..... Iberus. An. R. 884, of J. C. 133.
..... Sisenna.

C. Julius Servianus III. An. R. 885, of J. C. 134.
C. Vibius Varus.

Adrian passes the winter at Athens, where they are extremely fond of him; he loads them with favours.

Adrian stops the incursions of the Alans.

Revolt of the Jews. Barcochebas puts himself at their head. Tinnius Rufus, then governor of the country, opposes their first attacks. Julius Severus is sent from Great Britain to subdue them.

An. R. 886, of J. C. 135. ..... PONTIANUS.
..... ATILIANUS.

Adrian returns to Rome. Falls into a languishing way; he adopts L. Ceionius Commodus, a vicious man, with ill health. He makes him pretor, and sends him to command in Pannonia.

The taking of Bitther the last warlike exploit against the Jews. Barcochebas's death.

An. R. 887, of J. C. 136. L. CEIONIUS COMMODUS *.
SEX. VETULLENUS CIVICA POMPEIANUS.

Adrian's temper soured by his disorder. He puts Servian to death, his brother-in-law; Fuscus his great-nephew, and many others.

End of the Jewish war.

An. R. 888, of J. C. 137. L. ÆLIUS VERUS CÆSAR II.
P. COELIUS BALBINUS.

Julius Severus, after finishing the Jewish war, is sent to govern Bithynia, and shows himself no less a great magistrate than a great officer.

Ælia Capitolina rebuilt in the room of Jerusalem.

The Jews are forbidden to enter it, except on the anniversary of the destruction of their city.

CAMERINUS.

* Commodus is the same, whose adoption by Adrian is related under the preceding year. He ought therefore to be called Elius Cæsar in his first consulate, as he is the second which follows. If, in order to solve that difficulty, we would suppose that he was not adopted till the end of that year, we must give the lie to Spartian, who places his adoption before his pretorship and consulate. We may conjecture that Adrian had determined the adoption of Commodus the year before, and declared his resolution, that he made way for it by conferring on him the honours of pretor and consul; but that the adoption was not executed formally till the year when Commodus was consul the first time.

..... Camerinus. An. R. 889, of J. C. 138.
..... Niger.

Verus Cæsar dies the night before the first of January.

The twenty-fifth of February, Adrian adopts Titus Antoninus, and makes him adopt M. Annius Verus, afterwards called Marcus Aurelius, and the son of Verus Cæsar.

Death of Sabina, Adrian's wife.

Adrian despairs. He desires a sword or poison to put himself to death, and Antony forbids obeying him.

Many senators saved by Antonius from Adrian's fury.

Adrian's death at Baiæ in Campania, the tenth of July.

The senate wants to condemn his memory, and to abolish his acts. Antoninus prevents that disgrace, and even obtains for him, though with much difficulty, the honour of being ranked among the gods.

ADRIAN.

SECT. I.

Adrian proclaimed emperor in Syria, writes to the senate to desire a confirmation of what had been done by the army. The senate grants it. Adrian remains some time in the East. He abandons all Trajan's conquests in the East. Adrian's jealousy of Trajan's glory. He preserves peace all his reign, purchasing it of the barbarians. The Jews reduced to an entire submission by Martius Turbo. Adrian returns to Rome, and secures the tranquillity of Dacia, by making peace with the Sarmatæ and Roxolani. Dangers from domestic enemies. Adrian uses clemency at first. A conspiracy. Four consular persons put to death. Adrian denies his having any hand in these executions. He endeavours to efface the odious impression by his bounties to the people. A mixture of virtues and vices in Adrian. A popular maxim of Adrian concerning the nature of power. His taste for simplicity. He lives familiarly with his friends. His conduct towards the people mixed with complaisance and steadiness. He is extremely popular to the cities in alliance or in subjection to the empire. He is affable and liberal to individuals. His attention to ease the public calamities. Acts of clemency. Multitude and magnificence of Adrian's works over all the empire. Care of justice. He frequently administers it himself. His attention to the conduct of the governors of the provinces. Four consular persons established with the power of jurisdiction over Italy. Perpetual edict. Laws upon different subjects.

Adrian

Adrian gives no credit to freedmen. He preserves military discipline by his diligence and example. He is much beloved by the soldiery. He makes several regulations in regard to the Roman militia. Adrian not so valuable a man as a prince. He piques himself upon his application to all the arts and sciences, even astrology and magic. He is skilled in the Roman and Greek religion, and despises all others. He was moderate as to the Christian religion. Adrian's indiscreet curiosity in the common affairs of life. He loves the conversation of the learned, and their merit raises his jealousy. Examples of Dionysius of Miletum and Favorinus. He banishes, and afterwards puts to death, Apollodorus the architect. He is always violent in his friendship and hatred. He envies even the glory of the dead. He persecutes all his friends. Tatian proscribed. Martius Turbo disgraced. Similis retires. Adrian's wicked proceedings against his wife. Disgrace of Septicius Clarus and Suetonius. Enormous debauches of Adrian. Antinous. Adrian's extravagant passion for dogs and hunting-horses. The notion that may be formed of Adrian's character.

Adrian proclaimed emperor in Syria, writes to the senate to desire the confirmation of what had been done by the army. *Dio.* and *Spart. Adr.* 5. and 6.

ADRIAN being called to the empire under a more than suspicious title, made haste to avail himself of it, before the imposition could be discovered and made known. As soon as he received at Antioch, where he then was, the news of Trajan's death, he caused himself to be acknowledged and proclaimed emperor by the army. After he had thus put himself in the actual possession of the sovereign power, there remained nothing but the matter of form, a very important article, however, towards finishing the work. He demanded, therefore, of the senate a confirmation of what had been done by his troops. In the letter to the senate he apologized for not having waited for their determination,

mination, before he had taken the title of emperor, the impatience of the legions (he told them) would not suffer the republic to be without a head. At the same time, with an affectation of modesty, which cost him but little, he declared himself an enemy to all flattery, and forbade them, on this and every other occasion, to give him any titles of honour till he himself had first consented to them. He
Dio. ap. Val. was very liberal likewise in his promises, protesting that his whole government should be directed to the public good, and binding himself with an oath never to put a senator to death. He then showed his filial piety, by entreating them to give his predecessor and adoptive father a place among the gods.

The senate agrees to every thing desired.

Whether the fraud in regard to Adrian's being adopted was not known at the time, or those who might have their suspicions durst not stir in so delicate an affair, so far is certain, the senate raised no difficulties about the legality of the title, which was the foundation of the advancement of the new emperor. They granted him even more than he desired, for the title of Father of his Country was offered to him, as an appendage of the supreme power; but Adrian declined it, and, finding his modesty hurt, he deferred the acceptance of it, after
Tillem. not. I. ap. Adr. the example of Augustus, who had not taken it till he had governed a certain number of years.

It appears, however, that Adrian's resistance on this occasion was easily overcome, and that he agreed to be called the father of his country the next year, being the second of his reign. They also resolved to honour him with the triumphs which Trajan had merited by his exploits in the East. Though there was some colour for this adulation, as Adrian had a very considerable command in the war against the Parthians, yet he positively refused to take to himself the honours due to another, and reserved the whole for the ashes of the true conqueror. He ordered Trajan's sepulchral urn to be brought into Rome

Rome in a triumphal chariot, not with the pomp of a funeral, but with all the pageantry of a triumph.

As to the external marks of respect and affection which he proposed should be shown to the memory of Trajan, the senate readily went into them with more zeal and sincerity than the emperor himself who desired them. Orders are easily obeyed when the heart, that is, the inclination, would act without them.

Adrian remains some time in the East.

Adrian was necessarily detained for some time in the East; not being at liberty, therefore, to accompany the ashes of his predecessor to Rome, he nevertheless would not dispense with coming to do them honour in person at Selinonte; and having discharged that duty, and left the care of transporting them into Italy to Plotina, Trajan's widow, to Matidia her niece, and to Tatian, he returned to Antioch.

I have already said that Adrian did not love war, and that it was the necessity only of making his court to Trajan which had engaged him to apply himself to military exercises, and to follow that warlike prince in most of his expeditions. After he became master, he plainly showed his taste for peace.

He abandons all Trajan's conquests in the East.

He found himself in a situation full of dangers and difficulties. The Roman empire was then at the height of its grandeur, but subject to great disturbances. The nations lately conquered by Trajan had availed themselves of that prince's disorder to throw off the yoke. The Moors in the extreme parts of Africa, the fierce nations of Great Britain, the Sarmatians upon the Teisse and the Danube, were either already in motion, or hastening to it. Egypt, Lybia, and Palestine, were not yet recovered from the violent convulsions caused by the revolt of the Jews. In fine, Adrian had but too much reason to fear intrigues and conspiracies from those who were displeased with his promotion.

It would, perhaps, have been difficult for him to withstand all this in the beginning of a government weakly established. He determined to lessen his difficulties by procuring peace in the East, with giving up the conquests which Trajan had made. In this he pretended to imitate the example of Cato the elder, who, he said, had voted in the senate for giving liberty to the Macedonians, because it was not possible to keep them in subjection. I know not where Adrian got this anecdote, which it is not easy * to reconcile with facts well attested in history. But he was desirous to conceal, under the sanction of a great name, the disgrace of narrowing the bounds of the empire, and giving the lie to the oracle † which had promised that the god Terminus should never recede. Adrian then acknowledged Chosroës as king, and brought away the remains of the Roman troops in Armenia, Assyria, and Mesopotamia, and agreed that the Euphrates should be the barrier of the empire, as it had been before Trajan. The Armenians chose themselves a king, and the king of the Parthians received a little state from Adrian, which is not otherwise specified.

Spart. 2. and 5.

Among the sundry motives which are said to determine Adrian to give up these three provinces, a jealousy of his predecessor's glory, who had conquered

Adrian's jealousy against Trajan's glory. Spart. c. 9.

* We may see in vol. viii. of the history of the republic, p. 175, the motives which determined the senate to grant liberty to the Macedonians, after the defeat and taking of Perseus. The fear of not being able to be their masters is not looked upon as of any weight.

† See the history of the republic, T. I. p. 299. St Augustin, l. 4. Of the city of God, c. 20. made against the Pagans the same objection which we repeat here, of the necessity this pretended god Terminus was under to give ground in obedience to Adrian's orders, after resisting of Jupiter. We may add, he did not retire then for the first time, and that the treaty of the Romans with Persenna had already shown the falsity of the prediction, if ever there was such a one. See the same volume of the Roman History, 381.

quered them, has been suspected as one, a suspicion not ill founded. Adrian did not resemble Trajan enough ever to have loved him, and, as he is represented naturally envious, it is not surprising he should be hurt with the sight of laurels he himself could never acquire. Eutropius assures us he had Eutrop. some thought of renouncing Dacia likewise, and that he was only prevented by the representations of his friends, setting forth the great number of Roman citizens who would be exposed to all the cruelties of the barbarians, if he executed his design of bounding the empire on this side the Danube. He yielded to this reasoning, but demolished the most beautiful monuments of Trajan's glory in these countries. He pulled down all the arches of the Dio. Traj bridge over the Danube, and left nothing remaining but the piles. His intention was, he said, to prevent the incursions of the barbarians, who, after forcing the bridge-guard, would spread themselves with impunity into Mœsia. It is remarkable that a Roman emperor should fear nations who might so easily be made to fear him. He showed himself timorous by his desire not to appear ungrateful. It Spart. is not said what pretence he used for taking down the theatre which Trajan had built at Rome in the Campus Martius; but a prince who was under so many obligations, of decency at least, to preserve the monuments of his predecessor's glory, could not possibly destroy them, without being considered as actuated by malice and envy.

In showing himself thus an enemy to Trajan's memory, he did it with the more ill grace, as he never failed to encounter the public censure with the authority of this revered name. When at any time he suspected his conduct might be disliked, he said he always acted agreeably to the orders which Trajan had left him; an artifice borrowed from the examples of Antony and Tiberius, who had made the same use, the one of the name of Cæsar, the other of Augustus. In the life of Adrian,

Adrian, we shall make many other discoveries which but too plainly show the want of a noble soul and a grateful heart.

I have already said, that besides the commotions in the East, which he put a stop to by sacrificing the glory of his predecessor, and of the republic, there were also disturbances in several of the other provinces. The writers which I use for my guides are so very barren, and so little attentive to discharge the duty of historians, that we find many gaps with regard to facts, and very imperfect relations. So it is impossible for me to satisfy my reader's curiosity as to the measures taken by Adrian to establish peace in all the different parts of the empire. Let us see what these imperfect records will afford us.

The Jews reduced to an entire subjection by Martius Turbo. Spart. 5, 6, 7, and 4.

Lusius Quietus had been employed by Trajan against the Jews in Mesopotamia, and he was, at the death of that prince, governor of Palestine. Adrian, distrusting him, removed him from his government, and disarmed him by taking away the command of or breaking the auxiliary Moors, his countrymen, who had always been attached to him*. In his room he charged with the care of entirely reducing the Jews to subjection Martius Turbo, a man of equal parts with Lusius, and whom he considered as an old friend. Turbo succeeded in his commission, and was afterwards sent into Mauritania, where he likewise quelled the disturbances which perhaps the removal of Lusius had occasioned.

Adrian

* I am obliged to make use of this alternative, because the expression in the original is obscure. *Sublatis.* The authors of the History of the Emperors write so very ill, and their language is so different from that of the writers of the learned age, that one is often puzzled to guess their meaning. Faults have even got into their text. Thus, in the present passage, *sublatis gentibus Mauris quos cogebat*, I should believe that, instead of *gentibus*, we ought to read *gentilibus*, his countrymen.

Adrian himself visited Dacia, disturbed with the incursions of the Sarmatians; and, doubtless with a view to settle that province, he took his route through Illyria, when he left the East to return into Italy, the year after the death of Trajan. We know not the particulars of what he did then, but the year after he was obliged to return there again to oppose the Sarmatians and Roxolani, who, complaining of the lessening of the pension which had been agreed to be paid them, had taken up arms. It appears there was some battle in which the Romans had the advantage; and it is probable upon that occasion happened what is reported by Dion of the Batavi, who served as auxiliaries in Adrian's army. They swam over the Danube in their armour, and by their boldness so frightened their enemies, that they determined to accept of peace. Adrian helped to conclude it by gratifying them in their complaints.

Adrian returns to Rome, makes sure of the tranquillity of Dacia by making peace with the Sarmatians and Roxolani.

An. R. 880.

Euseb. Chron.

Spart.

This was the only expedition which this emperor conducted in person; there was no other war during his whole reign, but that occasioned by the revolt of the Jews, of which we shall speak elsewhere. Adrian liked peace as much as Trajan did war; and we see, from what has already been related of his conduct with regard to the Sarmatians and Roxolani, a specimen of his politics by which he kept himself in peace.

He preserves peace during all his reign, by purchasing it of the barbarians.

From this account, taken from ancient authors, it plainly follows, that the sovereigns of these barbarous nations, under the more decent name of a pension, received a tribute from the Roman emperor. Domitian was the first who had set that disgraceful and pernicious example, when he purchased peace of Decebalus. I can hardly believe that Trajan, with his warlike dispositions, ever granted to the Sarmatians and Roxolani what appeared to him such an ignomony with regard to the Daci, that he revenged it with the destruction of that nation.

I

It seems to me more probable that Adrian, when he came from the East into the countries near the Danube, had proposed to pay these barbarous nations certain sums to induce them to remain in peace; and, not having performed his promises, he furnished them with an opportunity of renewing the war. In his second voyage he was not sparing of his money, and by that means ended the quarrel. Such was the conduct he constantly pursued with all the barbarous nations bordering upon the empire. He allayed their heat, and kept them quiet by presents and pensions; and in this he was much pleased with his own prudent management. He valued himself in having acquired more by peace than others by arms. But this pretended wisdom was at bottom real cowardice; which, being imitated by his successors, became one of the principal causes of the ruin of the empire.

Vict. Epit.

Adrian did not trust so much to the promises of the Sarmatians and Roxolani as not to believe it necessary, in order to secure the tranquillity of the Dacians, to appoint them for governor a man of vigour and abilities. He cast his eye, therefore, upon the same Martius Turbo whom I have already mentioned, and appointed him prefect of Pannonia and Dacia, with all the honours and privileges which the prefect of Egypt had by the order of Augustus.

Dangers from domestic enemies. Adrian at first uses clemency.

The beginnings of Adrian's reign were disturbed, as I have observed, with plots and intrigues in the state, and with regard to these he observed two very different systems of conduct. At first he affected to show the greatest clemency. Whilst he was yet in the East, Tatian, whom he had made pretorian prefect, having written to him that he should rid himself of Bebius Macer, who was disaffected to his service; of Laberius Maximus, suspected of entertaining ambitious views, and upon that account actually banished to an island; and of Crassus Frugi,

who

who had conspired against Trajan; he refused to give ear to these bloody counsels. If Crassus lost his life shortly after, it was his own fault, for departing from the island which was assigned for the place of his exile. Besides, the intendant who killed him did not wait for the emperor's orders, and consequently he was no way chargeable with his death.

Conspiracy. Four consular persons put to death.

Two years after, finding his government better established, he no longer observed the same management. Whilst he was upon his voyage from Illyria, there was a conspiracy formed against him; the heads of which were four men of consular dignity; Domitius Nigrinus, Lusius Quietus, Palma, and Celsus. The three last had been greatly in Trajan's favour, and probably knowing what Plotina had done for Adrian, they thought it right not to suffer him to enjoy the fruits of a fraudulent adoption. They agreed, therefore, to kill him, either whilst he was hunting or sacrificing; for our authors differ as to that circumstance. Adrian escaped their snares, which were discovered, but after what manner we cannot tell. The four chiefs of the conspiracy were put to death by order of the senate; Palma at Terracinum, Celsus at Baiæ, Nigrinus at Faenza, and Lusius at a place which is not named.

I have spoken of the conspiracy as a thing certain, because Spartian has delivered it as such. Dion, nevertheless, leaves it in doubt as to its truth. But it is not probable that, under the reign of a prince who never acted the tyrant, four consular persons, of so great consequence, should be sacrificed on bare suspicion.

Adrian denies his having any hand in these executions.

However, their death raised the public hatred against Adrian. The blood of senators was then considered as extremely precious. Titus, Nerva, and Trajan, had shed none; and Adrian, when he came to the throne, had taken an oath that he would

would follow so good an example. Accordingly, he pretended to have no hand in the death of these illustrious personages; and, in the memoirs which he wrote of his life, he positively affirms they had been punished contrary to his inclination. Every one knows the amount of such declarations, and Adrian forgot himself; for afterwards he threw the blame of these executions upon the odious advice of Tatian.

He endeavours to remove these odious impressions by his liberality to the people.

He took the most effectual method to remove these ill * impressions which people had conceived of him. From his first coming to the empire, he had studied to make his government agreeable to the people by considerable abatements of their payments. Italy and the provinces were long accustomed to pay a certain tax to victorious emperors, under the name of crowns for decorating their triumphs. Adrian had remitted this entirely in Italy, and had taken off part of it in the provinces. Upon the occasion now mentioned, he was even profuse in the display of his bounty to the people. Before his return to Rome, he gave to every citizen three pieces of gold; and, when he arrived there, he gave twice as much in wine, meat, and corn; or money in lieu of them. He likewise increased the funds appointed by Trajan for the subsistence and education of children of both sexes.

Dio. and Spart.

These acts of liberality were not confined to Rome and Italy; for Adrian extended his generosity to the whole empire, by an entire and absolute discharge of whatever was owing from cities and particular persons, either to the imperial revenue or the public treasury; and, to secure the quiet enjoyment of the fruits of his bounty, he publicly burnt all the books and records which might afterwards serve to renew these claims. The sum which Adrian

* There are difficulties as to the date and circumstances. I omit these niceties; the notes of Tillemont may be consulted, 2 and 3

Adrian thus gave away was immense. And it is with great reason his liberality was honoured with a monument consecrated to his memory, and with an inscription* which praised him as having set a singular example of goodness to the people.

And by all possible marks of attention to the senate.

He gave the same proofs of his attention to the senate, whose affection he needed most of all to regain, because it was that body which chiefly interested itself, and was most alarmed at the severity exercised upon four of its principal members. He never decided any affair of consequence without advising with the senate; and as to lesser things, and such as required despatch, he consulted with a privy council, which, after the example of Augustus, he had formed of senators. He never failed attending every meeting of the senate, when he was at Rome or near it. He preserved the dignity of a senator in all its lustre by his difficulty of granting it; and he affected so highly to esteem it, that when he granted this honour to Tatian, whom he had appointed pretorian prefect, he declared he could do nothing more for aggrandizing him. It had often happened under former princes, that the Roman knights, who attended them, judged with them personal causes belonging to senators. Adrian abolished this practice, and would have the senators judged only by their peers. He put to the account of his treasury † the expenses of voyages and carriages, which till then the magistrates themselves had been obliged to pay when they went to the provinces they were to govern. In a word, he carried his respect and deference for the senate so far, that he did not scruple to load with the worst of execrations those persons who had been, or ever should be, wanting in this so essential a duty.

Besides

* See that inscription in Scaliger's Notes upon Eusebius's Chronology.

† The expression in the original ambiguous; I have used Casaubon's interpretation.

Besides this attention to the body in general, there were many individuals whom he had loaded with his favours, and which he conferred indiscriminately on his friends, and those with whom he had no personal connexion. With his acts of liberality he assisted senators who were become poor, without any fault of their own, proportioning his gifts to the number of their children. He enabled others to support the expenses of their office; and such was his indifference for show and distinction, that he did not take the title of Imperator but twice during his whole reign. He himself was only three times consul, and there were a great many senators, to whom he granted a third consulate. As for the honour of being twice consul, he was rather profuse in granting it.

A mixture of virtues and vices in Adrian.

Adrian had great vices, an unbounded desire to be first in every thing, and consequently an ill-natured envy against the merit of others; a restless disposition, full of caprice, with a heart insensible to all gratitude; he has even been accused of a natural bias to cruelty. But as he was a prince of good understanding, he well knew how much these vices, if he gave them full scope, were capable of hurting him; and his vanity, which was always predominant, engaged him, from the fear of infamy, or the love of applause, to preserve at least the appearances of virtue. From this mixture there proceeded a very ambiguous conduct, especially in matters of eclat; and in general the Roman empire was happy under his government. I am going to form an idea and plan which will contain what is most material to be said of this prince; for facts fail us, and the few we have it is difficult to range properly as to time.

A popular maxim of Adrian's, of the nature of his power.

Nothing is more popular, nor more capable of doing him honour, than that maxim which he had always ready, and which he frequently repeated in the assembly of the people, and in the senate. "I

"propose

" propose to myself," says he, " so to govern the " commonwealth, as to show I never forget it is " not my own property, and that I am no more " than administrator for the public *."

This language flattered the republican notions, which the Romans still retained in their hearts, and it was in itself an abridgment of all the duties of an emperor. I do not say that Adrian kept to it in its full extent; but his taste for simplicity, his indifference for all pomp, his attention to the public good, his exact administration of justice, the wisdom of many of his laws, and a great many marks of clemency, which shine through his whole conduct—all this shows that it was not mere words, but that he in some degree reduced them into practice.

His taste for simplicity. Spart. & Dio.

I have already said that he was not fond of vain honours. For instance, he refused to give his consent to a decree, appointing his name and acts of goodness to be celebrated with games in the circus, besides those already observed in honour of his birth. He did not require that any should be assiduous in attending his court. On the contrary, to ease the great men of any restraint of that kind, he affected to shut himself up in his palace those days in which his appearance was not necessary; and then he only gave audience to those who had business with him. For the same reason, he was generally carried in a chair into the city, to prevent having a train of attendants; and whilst he dispensed with these observances from others, he performed them himself to the pretors and consuls, whom he attended as if he had been a private person, upon their taking possession of their office, and on other public days.

* Et in senatum et in concione sæpe dixit; ita se republicam gesturum, ut sciret populi rem esse, non propriam.

He lived familiarly with his friends.

He lived familiarly with his friends; he had not only always at his table the principal senators, but he ate with them, rode in their coaches, made one at their domestic entertainments, and visited them at their country-houses. He accepted of presents from them, and made them returns; endeavouring, by surprise, to enhance the pleasure. If any were sick, he visited them twice or thrice a day. He comforted them under their misfortunes, and gave them advice in their difficulties; and it was not only to persons of high rank he discharged these offices, but sometimes to knights and freedmen. He made it a rule always to honour his friends; and he erected statues for several in the public places after their death, or whilst they were alive. Dion adds, that none of those whom Adrian took into his friendship, ever became insolent upon it, or sold his favour. This would be a great character, indeed, both of the prince and his confidents. But here he himself was extremely unjust; since, according to Spartian, there were none of those whom he loved most, he did not afterwards treat as enemies.

Spart. 17.

Spart. 15.

His conduct with regard to the multitude was steady and complaisant. He endeavoured to render himself extremely popular, insomuch that he went with the people to the public baths. Upon this occasion, they report of him an act of great goodness. Having observed in the bath an old soldier, whom he had known in the war, rubbing his back against the marble with which the wall was covered, he asked him, why he did not make some body help him. Because I have no servant, replied the soldier. Upon this, Adrian gave him slaves, with a present in money. But, whilst he was assisting real want, he would not suffer himself to be imposed upon by artifice; for, a few days after, when some other veterans employed themselves in the same way which had succeeded so well with the soldier,

soldier, he, smiling, told them, "There are a great "many of you assist one another."

In the design which he constantly pursued of being loved by the people, he made use of games and shows as powerful allurements. The first time he came to Rome, after his promotion to the empire, he gave combats of gladiators for six days successively, where a thousand fierce animals, a hundred lions, and as many lionesses, were slain to please the multitude. Adrian continued, during his whole reign, to entertain the people with all sorts of shows, chariot-races in the circus, plays in the theatre; wherein, to divert the public, he made the court comedians act military dances, called by the ancients Pyrrhics; and all these diversions were carried on with surprising magnificence. The stairs in the theatre were covered with balm and saffron; to this were added presents, not only of wine and meat, but of precious spices. They distributed these doles, which I have elsewhere compared to lucky numbers of a lottery. Such was the attention of Adrian to please the people's taste. Amidst all this, he did not flatter them, nor run into the extreme of a blind complaisance. Dion tells us, that at a show of gladiators, the populace obstinately persisting in a request which he did not think proper to grant, he ordered the herald to cry silence. Discipline was so well observed, and his orders so regarded, that, at the first signal which the herald made with his hand, all was hushed. "See," says he, "what the emperor "desires of you;" and Adrian was pleased with him for not having used the commanding expression which he had prescribed.

Upon another occasion the people interested themselves eagerly in favour of a charioteer of the circus, and made strong representations to procure his liberty. Adrian would not consent, and he caused this answer in writing to be handed about

the assembly. "It does not belong to you to de-
"sire I should set at liberty the slave of another.
"It is for his own master to decide, and you have
"no right to oblige him."

He shows himself popular to the cities allied or in subjection to the empire.

His system of bounty and magnificence was not confined to the Romans alone. In all the great cities which he visited in the course of his voyages he gave games, and did not disdain the taking upon himself their municipal offices, as if he had been one of their citizens. He was particularly fond of Athens, and was twice archon; first under Trajan, and afterwards when he himself was emperor. He did the duty of that magistrate; he wore the dress, and presided at all the games which were celebrated at Athens in honour of Bacchus. He was pretor in Etruria, he was dictator and edile in several cities of Latium, he accepted the first magistracy at Naples, at Adria in Picenum, where he pretended his family took its first rise, at Italica in Spain, which he considered as his native country.

Salmas. not. ad. Spart. Adri. 13.

He is affable and liberal to individuals. Spart. 20. and Dio.

He was affable to particular persons, and familiar with the lowest; and he showed an * abhorrence of that † pride of princes, who, under pretence of preserving their rank, deprive themselves of the pleasures of society. His gracious manner was followed by substantial favours, which acquired new merit, because he prevented the trouble of asking; and necessity, when known, wanted no promoter.

His attention to ease the public calamities. Spart. 2.

Under his reign there happened many public calamities; famines, epidemical disorders, and earthquakes. Adrian applied every remedy in his power,

* Detestans eos qui sibi hanc voluptatem humanitatis, quasi servantes fastigium principis, inviderme.

† It is the same thought which Bossuet has expressed so emphatically in his funeral oration of princes. The great, says, that admirable orator, who are not good, are most justly punished for their disdainful insensibility, being always deprived of the greater good in life, the sweets of society.

power, and the cities and countries which had suffered most he eased by remitting of debts, and by gifts which he made them. They particularly mention the cities of Nice and Nicomedia as entirely restored by his liberality, after they had severely suffered from violent earthquakes. Euseb. Chron.

It would be giving but a faint representation of his clemency to say no more than this, that he gave no ear to accusations of treason, which had been pardoned by Nerva and Trajan; and that the great and the rich did not suffer under his government, from unjust condemnations and forfeitures, so frequent under Domitian. Adrian's clemency went further, he even knew how to pardon offences; those who had shown themselves his enemies, when a private person, had no occasion to fear him when emperor. He never gave them any marks of resentment, unless they deserved it anew, as Palma and Celsus, by their attempts upon his person. He forgot old injuries, and when he arrived at the sovereign power, he said to one of those from whom he had received the most convincing proofs of his hatred, "Behold yourself in perfect safety."

A sovereign cannot always pardon, and he is under a necessity sometimes to show marks of his displeasure to the guilty. Adrian generally went no further than a bare reprimand; and in case the offence was of such a nature as rendered punishment indispensably necessary, he moderated it in proportion to the number of the offender's children. He gave an absolute pardon to a slave, who, whilst he was walking in his garden at Terragona, endeavoured with a naked sword to run him through. This unfortunate creature was disordered in his mind, and knew not what he did. Adrian, though he had been in great danger, and rescued only by his officers hasting to his assistance, yet, when he was informed of the slave's condition, he believed he ought not to punish a madman, and therefore or-

dered him to be put into the hands of physicians, to cure him if possible.

The number & magnificence of Adrian's works in the empire. Spart. 13. 14. Dio. and Pausan. 1. and 2.

No prince appears to have equalled him in the number and magnificence of public works. He visited all the parts of the empire, and there is scarcely a city where he has not left substantial proofs of his attention to the advantage and conveniency of its inhabitants. He repaired old edifices, built new ones, baths, aqueducts, and harbours. He particularly deserves thanks for his zeal to do honour to the memories of great men of antiquity, and to repair or embellish their monuments. He erected upon Epaminondas's tomb, at Mantinea, a pillar upon which he caused an honourable inscription to be put, of which he himself was the author. And I have related elsewhere, how in Egypt he searched for and discovered the place where Pompey's ashes were said to be laid, that he might do them honour.

Pausan. 8.

Hist. Rom. T. XIV. p. 55.

He was particularly favourable to Greece, as the mother of all learning; and we see from Pausanias, that he made it abound with beautiful edifices, with gifts and offerings in all their famous temples. Without running over the particular cities of this country, I shall confine myself to Athens, where he built a temple to Juno, a temple to Jupiter Panellenian, or *presiding over all Greece;* and a temple in common for all the gods. He finished that of Jupiter Olympus, begun upon a magnificent plan by Antiochus Epiphanes, the only one, in the opinion of Titus Livius, becoming the grandeur of the king of the gods*. That stately work was left unfinished by Antiochus, and had been defaced by length of time, and the impious hands of men. Adrian repaired its ruins, and put the finishing stroke to it. He dedicated it with great solemnity, and consecrated to Jupiter a statue of ivory

* Unum in terris inchoatum pro magnitudine dei. Liv. 41

ivory and gold, whose workmanship was suitable to its composition. The honour due to learning will not suffer us, whilst we are giving an account of the public buildings raised by Adrian, to pass over in silence a library, which is called a wonderful work. Euseb. Chron.

If this prince showed his magnificence to the Greeks, they in return were full of gratitude to him. Every nation in Greece erected in honour of him a statue in the temple of Jupiter Olympus; and the Athenians distinguished themselves among the rest by erecting a Colossian statue. They even carried their impious flattery so far as to assign him divine honours, or rather he assumed them to himself; for he built himself altars and temples in the different cities of Asia. It appears from several ancient monuments, that he permitted them to equal him to Jupiter, with the surname of Olympus. Spart. 13. Gotfr. Olear. ad. Phil. Soph. Polem. I.

At Rome he was more modest. He not only did not desire the honours of a god, after the ill examples of Caligula and Domitian, who alone had arrogantly taken them, but, with regard to honours from men, he even neglected what was his due. He repaired or rebuilt such grand edifices as had suffered or been demolished, either by accidental fires which happened in the reigns of Nero and Titus, or by lightning—the Pantheon, the Julian parks, many temples, the palace of Augustus, and the baths of Agrippa; and he did not take to himself any share in the honours which were due to him from so many and so great works. He suffered the names of the first founders to remain without any mention of his own. Here he would have nothing but of full right; for instance, the temple which he built to Trajan, a bridge over the Tyber, which he ordered to be called the Elian bridge, from the name of his family, and the burying-place that he built, a magnificent edifice, which looked more like a fortress; and such, indeed, was the use

it was put to several ages afterwards. Adrian's tomb, with the addition of some fortifications, is become the citadel of Rome, under the name of the castle of St Angelo. The Elian bridge, which leads to it, has taken the same name, and is likewise called the bridge of St Angelo. Adrian likewise built at Rome a school for the belles lettres, which he called the Athenæum.

Aurel. Vict.

Spart. 22. Spartian informs us, that he made a passage for the waters of the lake Fucinus; by which he undoubtedly means, that he cleared the canal, and repaired the works, which Claudius had made with that view, and which Nero, out of hatred to his predecessor, had neglected. I have elsewhere observed, that if the design of all this great expense was to dry the lake Fucinus, it was entirely thrown away, since the lake remains in the same state, with only the change of the name; it is now called the lake of Celano.

Spart. 12. In speaking of Adrian's works, we must not forget a basilica which he built in honour of Plotina, at Nimes in Gaul.

This prince's modesty and indifference for perpetuating his name was confined to Rome. In all the rest of the empire he observed a very different conduct. He gave his name to an infinite number of aqueducts. Those who are conversant in such things reckon nine cities in different countries which were called Adrianople. He founded one in Mysia, and named it Adrianotheria, which signifies Adrian's hunt, because in that district he had had a good chace, and killed a boar. His family name was Elius, and there were three cities called Elia, two in Spain and Jerusalem, after Adrian had rebuilt it; but his vanity was punished by the event. None of those cities which bore his name retained it; and for many ages past we find no remains of it but in Adrianople.

I will conclude this article of Adrian's buildings with his country-house upon the Tyber. It was a prodigious work; and, after so many ages, and so many revolutions, the foundations still remain vouchers of its grandeur. The subterraneous vaults are standing, as if they had been but lately built. The several apartments are ranged and adorned with elegance of taste, and at the same time with a display of learning. Adrian, who loved knowledge, and had travelled much, was desirous that his pleasure-house should represent to him the most celebrated places of the universe. There was to be seen the Lycæum, the Pyretanæum, the famous portico of Athens, called Pecile, Canopus of Egypt, Tempe of Thessaly, and even the abode of the dead, according to the representation of the fables and poets; and there is no reason to doubt but these different apartments were planned after the famous places whose names they bear.

Spart. 26. of Martin. art. Tivoli.

Ancient Hist. T. XI. Pt. I. p. 149.

The Canopus was decorated with a great many Egyptian curiosities, which being dug up, have in these latter times been placed, by Pope Benedict XIV. in the capitol at Rome. There now remains of this magnificent palace of Adrian nothing but the ruins, in a place called by the inhabitants Tivoli Vecchio, the old Tivoli.

Journal of travels, July 1751, art. 74.

One of the things for which Adrian most of all deserves to be esteemed is the administration of justice, and the wisdom of his laws for establishing and maintaining peace among the citizens. He considered an attention to the ending of disputes, by equitable decisions, as one of the principal duties of a sovereign, and he frequently discharged it himself.

His care of justice, often administers it himself.

In his voyages, when he was at a city, he administered justice to those who came to him; and he took great care to have the ablest lawyers of the time for his assistants. History particularly mentions

Spart. 8. 12. 22. Dio.

tions * Julius Celsus, Salvius Julianus, and Neratius Priscus. He would sometimes act the part of an assessor to the consuls, and, whilst they gave audience, would assist in passing the sentences. He never declined hearing whoever applied to him; and he very readily took a reproof from a poor woman whom he had at first rejected, telling her he had not time to hear her. "Be not then our "prince," replied the woman, with a freedom full of indignation. Adrian availed himself of the advice, though given so rudely, and gave her an audience. In this he imitated Philip the father of Alexander, of whom there is reported just such another transaction.

Ancient Hist. Vol. VI. p. 162

From the same attention to what was just and good, Adrian frequently appointed tutors to pupils who had none left them by their father's last will, and did not disdain to take upon himself that care which by law belonged to the pretor.

Attention to governors. Spart. 21.

His zeal for justice and good order led him to have a strict eye over those who governed provinces under his authority. He watched them narrowly, and informed himself very particularly of their conduct; and he knew how to discover truth through all the arts of dissimulation.

Four of consular dignity appointed, with power of jurisdiction over Italy. Ancient Hist. Vol. II. p. 27. Spart. 22. Capitol. T. Anton. c. 2

Italy, before and after Augustus, was, as I have elsewhere observed, under the immediate direction of the consuls, and of the Roman senate. The magistrates of every city decided common affairs; and if any difficulty arose they applied to the consuls, who gave an account of it to the senate. Adrian changed this police, and divided Italy among four men of consular dignity, who appear to have had in their several departments much the same authority which the proconsuls had in the provinces.

Adrian

* The learned think there is a mistake in the name of that lawyer, and that we must put in his place Juventius Celsus, of whom we spoke before in Domitian's reign.

Adrian made a very important reformation in the administration of justice in Rome. In the History of the Republic, mention has been made of the pretorian edict, which was an interpretation of the law, supplying their defects, and tempering the ancient severity according to circumstances. We have observed that a tribune, named Cornelius, had remedied a very great abuse on this subject by obtaining an order from the people that the pretors should be obliged, through the whole of their magistracy, to judge agreeably to the edict they had published at the commencement of their office. But this was no more than an annual law, where authority ceased with that of its maker, and the succeeding pretor was at liberty to make what alterations he pleased. Nevertheless, there were certain articles so clearly dictated by natural equity, and so well accommodated to the public good, that they gained universal approbation, and were adopted by all the pretors, and yearly inserted in their edicts. Adrian applied the finishing hand, and gave it a stability not to be revoked. With this view, he ordered Salvius Julianus, an eminent lawyer, from all the ancient edicts of pretors, to cull out the best, and from them to form one perpetual edict, which should always be considered as a law, and from which it should never be suffered to deviate.

A perpetual edict. Gravina de Orig. Juris, l. 1. art. 38. T. II. p. 595. and T. II. p. 217.

They relate many ordinances of this prince which do honour to his understanding. Thus he procured very considerable comforts for that condition of humanity which is of all others the most miserable, and in many material articles softened the rigour of servitude. He restrained that cruel law which condemned to death all the slaves whose master was assassinated, and ordered for the future that it should extend only to those who, from the nature of their employment, must be supposed near his person, and therefore had it in their power either to foresee the danger, or to have given him assistance. He did

Ordinances upon different subjects. Spart. 18. and 22.

did more; he took away from masters the arbitrary power of life and death over their slaves; and he ordered, that in such cases as they thought them deserving of death, they should apply to the magistrate, who alone should have the power of condemning them. He forbade likewise the selling them, or the making them, according to their sex, victims of prostitution or gladiators, without the authority of the judge; last of all, he forbade the use of private prisons, where masters kept their slaves in chains, condemned to the hardest labour; and which furnished an opportunity of carrying off free people, whom they often shut up there through fraud or violence. It is doubtful whether this good law was exactly observed, as in later times mention is made of private prisons.

From an attention to decency and manners, he forbade the promiscuous use of baths for both sexes. But an abuse, which natural modesty should of itself have prevented, was too powerful for the authority of the prince. Marcus Aurelius was obliged to repeat the same order, which was just as little regarded as that of Adrian's.

Spartian reports, if we follow Salmasius's interpretation, that Adrian renewed the ancient sumptuary laws enacted by Augustus; which seems to suppose that the luxury of the table, which, as I have observed, had been checked by Vespasian's example, and which had not been introduced again in the beginning of Trajan's reign, was now, after a long restraint, endeavouring to free itself. Adrian, being frugal and moderate in his entertainments, and in all his expenses, could therefore oppose it with a good grace. We cannot say the same of the law by which he forbade the abominable custom of human sacrifices. What we have to relate concerning Antinous's death shows, that in this article of so great consequence to humanity, Adrian's conduct was contradictory to his laws. Accordingly, he did not

See V. I. 171.

Grot. de Verit. Relig. Christ. II. 22.

not succeed in abolishing these horrible sacrifices; that honour, as I have elsewhere observed, was reserved for the Christian religion. Rom. Hist. T. XII.

Adrian punished fraudulent bankrupts with severity, and instead of suffering them, as it too frequently happens, to enjoy what they had secreted, he ordered them to be whipped.

He made a very wise law in regard to treasures found in the earth; he ordered that he who had discovered any in his own ground should have the whole profits to himself; and if the ground belonged to another, he should share them with the proprietor; and if in a place belonging to the public, he was to divide them with the imperial treasury. This law is renewed in Justinian's Institutes.

Adrian carried his attention so far as to settle a particular police, which has a more serious connexion with manners than superficial observers are apt to think. Like Augustus, zealous for the honour of the gown, he ordered that no senator or knight should ever appear in public without that dress, which was the proper Roman habit; and he himself set the example, always wearing the gown whilst he was in Italy. He often made use of it even at table, though the general fashion had introduced a different dress for entertainments. He forbade the opening the public baths before the eighth hour of the day; that is, two hours after mid-day, with an exception, however, for sick persons.

Adrian did not think some plain precautions for the conveniency of the public unworthy of his attention. We are told that he forbade to go on horseback into cities, or to bring into Rome carriages heavy loaded.

He was a great reformer, but with true judgment; and the alterations he introduced, either in the general police of the empire, in the service of the palace, or in the military discipline, and the government

vernment of the army, were confirmed by practice, and continued even to the reign of Constantine. He made new regulations of all these things; but, without altering what was established by Trajan, he only added what to him appeared wanting.

Adrian gives no credit to freedmen.

Adrian ordered his family with the same care he did the empire. In former reigns we have often seen the freedmen of emperors become the principal managers of all their affairs, and make the first of the state tremble under their enormous power. Those of Adrian were confined to domestic offices; he would not suffer them to go out of their sphere, or to concern themselves with what related to the republic. If any of them boasted of their influence with him, he punished them severely. He was careful to keep under those who by their condition were appointed for his service; and having one day observed a slave of his walking between two senators, he sent one to give him a box on the ear, and to tell him, "Learn not to take the place "of honour among those whose slave you may be." The emperors before Adrian had used their freedmen for secretaries, and had likewise employed them in receiving petitions. This prince rightly judged that these offices were too important and honourable for freedmen; and he was the first who gave them to the Roman knights.

He preserves military discipline by his vigilance and example. Dio. and Spart. 20. and 2.

Though Adrian was not fond of war, and never made any, nevertheless he was careful to preserve good discipline in his army; and to this wise precaution he was in a great measure indebted for the peace he enjoyed during his whole reign, for the barbarians on the frontiers were afraid of troops they saw so well exercised, and in readiness to act upon the first signal. In his voyages he was an exact observer of every thing; the strong places, the citadels, the camps; he himself examined the soldiers' arms, the warlike machines, the fossees, the ramparts, the parapets; nothing escaped him.

He

He was careful to inform himself of the state of the magazines, and to supply them with what provisions were wanting; to have plenty, and at the same time to avoid all superfluous expense. He would buy nothing that was useless, nor maintain what could be of no service. He had an account brought him of the behaviour of his soldiers and officers; and as he had an excellent memory, he retained every thing. By this means he knew his army just as well as a careful master of a family does his household. There was no imposing upon him, nor making corps pass for complete which were not so; their numbers, their names, every thing was before him. He prevented the colours being tarnished by a number of idle and useless ceremonies, and required the officers to make themselves beloved by the soldiers, not by condescensions contradictory to good discipline, but by carrying an even hand, and acting in all things with justice. As for himself, he gave nothing to favour in the choice of his officers. To arrive at the rank of centurion or tribune, one must have attained to the proper age, and given proofs of himself. He bestowed properly his praises and dispraises, his rewards and punishments. He gave spirit to military exercises by his orders, by his presence, and by taking a part in them himself.

With an inflexible severity he retrenched every thing that could possibly introduce or support effeminacy in the camp. These camps, as I have more than once observed, were placed for a continuance, and were regularly possessed by the same troops, excepting in the winter months, which they passed in the cities. They had been used, for their ease and pleasure, to make subterraneous porticoes, walks, and groves of trees, to shelter them from the heat. All these inventions of luxury and pleasure Adrian demolished. He would have his soldiers accustomed to bear the inconveniences of heat and cold, marching

ing always with their heads bare in the snows of the Alps, and under the scorching sun of Egypt.

In every thing he behaved so as to be a perfect model to his soldiers, well knowing that no law is near so powerful over those under command as the example of their commander.

He lived with all the plainness of a soldier; and, valuing himself in imitating the greatest generals of the ancient republic, and his predecessor Trajan, he often dined in public on pork and cheese, with a mixture of water and vinegar for drink. He did not distinguish himself by the richness of his dress; there was no gold upon his girdle, nor clasps of fine stones; scarcely a sword with an ivory handle. He marched on foot at the head of his troops with heavy armour; and in this manner he continued the whole march of a Roman soldier, which was at least twenty miles or seven leagues; sometimes, however, he made use of a horse, but never of a carriage.

He is extremely beloved by the soldiers.

His thus associating himself with the soldiers was a sure way to gain the affection of his army. To this he joined proofs of his goodness, going to see them when sick, and taking care not to detain in the service any that were too old, and preventing their officers from oppressing them with exactions which custom had countenanced, and which after him were practised again. He showed himself likewise extremely liberal, and gave them a proof of it by doubling, at his accession to the throne, the largesses which it was customary for emperors to give to the soldiers. By these different ways, without any relaxation of discipline, he succeeded in making himself beloved—a convincing proof that irregular indulgences, in order to gain the affection, are only adopted by little minds; and that men of more elevated genius, by a steady conduct, without ill nature or caprice, know how to acquire the regard and love of their inferiors.

Spart. 20.

Spart. 23.

It

It appears, by the testimony of Dion and Victor the younger, that Adrian made many regulations in the Roman militia; but they have left us in the dark as to any particulars, which would have been both instructing and curious. One of them only tells, that he regimented the pioneers, the carpenters and other workmen and artists necessary for making of warlike machines, and for the fortification of places. Every legion, for a long time after, had a certain number of them in their train. The alteration made by Adrian was evidently his forming them into a body, with their proper discipline and officers, after the manner of the artillery with us.

He made many regulations of the Roman militia.

We have hitherto considered Adrian as a prince, and we have found much subject of praise; as a man, he was far from deserving the same esteem. This was not owing to his want of understanding, for he had a great and extensive penetration, with an astonishing memory, remembering every thing he had seen or read, and forgetting neither the names of persons nor the nature of things which had gone through his hands, nor the situation of the places he had once been in. After reading a book, he could immediately repeat it from beginning to end. Let a list of names, confusedly mixed together, be recited to him, he would recount them without a mistake. His understanding was so easy and so ready, he could, at the same time, write, dictate to his secretary, give audience, and converse with his friends. Another proof may be brought of his quickness of apprehension, from his talent for humour. There were many strokes of this preserved in Spartian's time, who, nevertheless, has mentioned but one: A man, with white hair, begged a favour of Adrian, and was refused; some time afterwards, the same man presented the same petition again, but he had disguised his hair by dying it black. Adrian, pretending not to know him, upbraided

Adrian less to be esteemed as a man than a prince. Dio. and Spart. 14. and 20. and Vict. Epit.

him for his device, with this answer, "I have al-
"ready refused your father what you now ask."

There were undoubtedly great advantages which I have observed this prince possessed, had he not corrupted them with an indiscreet and insatiable curiosity, and an excessive vanity, which led him to desire to excel in every thing, and to look upon all glory acquired by others with a jealous eye.

He values himself in comprehending all the sciences and arts.

Curious beyond all rule and measure, he was not satisfied with employing his active genius in the study of government, and of attending to all the different departments, which, in so vast an empire as his, became infinite. It was not enough for him to cultivate the flowers of learning and art, to enjoy what is of use to princes, and to acquire a general knowledge of other things, to enable him to judge of them; he affected to comprehend and to go to the bottom of every thing. Eloquence, history, and even poetry, were not sufficient for him. He would study and practise music, dancing, painting, and sculpture. He succeeded in these; but what glory is there in all this to a prince?

Even astrology and magic. Dio. & Spart. 16.

His vast curiosity could not fail inducing him to endeavour at unveiling futurity. He gave his time to astrology and magic; studies equally foolish and criminal. We are assured he became very expert in them; and Spartian gravely tells us, that the first night of January, Adrian committed to writing every thing that was to befal him that year. Spartian's credulity is not what we should wonder at, but a man could not help being surprised at Adrian's folly, if he did not know how much a violent passion darkens the human understanding.

Spart. 2. 31.

His fondness for divination had been increased by several presages he fancied he had received of his promotion. The most famous of these is the oracle given by the fountain of Castalia, in the suburbs of Daphne near Antioch, which had positively promised him the sovereign power. Jealous of that distinguishing

distinguishing favour, and fearing lest others should obtain the like, and avail themselves of it, as he had done, he ordered the fountain to be shut up with great stones.

He makes himself well versed in Roman and Greek religion, and despises all others.

As to religion, which, with the Pagans, consists of nothing but external rites and ceremonies, the care which Adrian took to be acquainted with it was not carried to any blameable excess. As sovereign pontiff, he was at the head of the Roman religion, and he discharged the duties of his office; whereas his predecessors were generally satisfied with the title. He was fond of the Greek worship, and got himself initiated into all the mysteries celebrated in their different cities, especially the Eleusinian, which he transferred, or rather imitated, afterwards at Rome. He paid but little attention to the religion of those nations whom the Romans and Greeks considered as barbarians, they appearing to him deserving only of contempt. This makes it difficult for me to believe, upon Lampridius's testimony, that he formed a design to consecrate, in honour of Jesus Christ, a great many temples, which he had begun, but not finished, in the several cities of Asia and Egypt, and which remained without a dedication or statue. It is much more probable that he intended them for himself, and for his own proper worship.

Alex. c. 43.

67.

He was moderate in regard to the Christian religion.

By supposing Adrian's contempt for foreign religions went no further than a mere indifference, without any mixture of aversion or ill-natured zeal, it will be easy for us to conceive his motive for not persecuting Christianity. Perhaps he was affected with the excellent apologies which were published in his reign by S. Quadratus and S. Aristides. So much is certain, that Adrian showed himself moderate to the Christians. The mad clamours of the people, it is true, made many martyrs; but this prince never lent his authority. Eusebius has even preserved a rescript of Adrian's, which blames the

rage of the multitude, and forbids the paying any attention to it, ordering, that Christians should be regularly prosecuted, and condemned, if convicted of a breach of the law; but, on the other hand, if the charge brought against them should not be proved, in that case their accusers should be punished. This rescript is quoted as a favourable one, which it certainly was; it was not to be expected that a Pagan emperor should expressly authorize Christianity; but the requiring that some breach of the law should be proved against Christians, and not declaring their profession itself a crime, was giving room for their being absolved, where there was nothing but their religion to upbraid them with.

Adrian's indiscreet curiosity in the affairs of life. Spart. 2.

I return to Adrian's curiosity, which went so far as to become a real distemper. He would know every thing, not only in point of learning, but of news, and minute details of things which no ways concerned him. He had spies, who insinuated themselves into his friends' houses, to observe every thing that passed, and to bring him an account of it. Spartian furnishes us upon this head with a very singular story: A husband having received a letter from his wife, complaining that the pleasures and diversions of Rome kept him at a great distance from her, desired leave of the emperor to return home; upon this he was greatly surprised by Adrian's reproaching him with the pleasures which had amused him at Rome. "What," says he, "has "my wife sent you a copy of the letter which she "wrote to me?"

He is fond of the conversation of learned men, and their merit raises his jealousy. Spart. 15, 16, 20.

Conversation with a prince of this disposition was irksome and uneasy, and the more so, as Adrian was not only extravagantly curious, but jealous and suspicious.

In consequence of his passion for literature and the arts, he admitted all men of knowledge, all philosophers, and all famous artists, into his familiar acquaintance. With them he entertained himself at

at Alexandria; he put questions to those who composed the academy * of that city, and he † resolved them himself, undoubtedly because the academics were too good courtiers to be desirous of appearing more knowing than the emperor.

He loved Epictetus, the philosopher Euphrates, of whom I have spoken elsewhere, and Favorinus, who, though born in Gaul, was notwithstanding, as he boasted himself, more of a Greek, and by the study of a polite literature was become one of the first philosophers and orators of his time.

But the greater part of those with whom he was pleased, on account of their knowledge and understanding, after receiving proofs of his favour, became, sooner or later, objects of his hatred and jealousy. His envious disposition appeared, in that he encouraged men of moderate genius, whilst he took a pleasure in humbling such as were eminent and distinguished. Dion reports, that professors who were not furnished with a sufficient stock of knowledge for their office easily obtained a pension from him, with which they retired. Men of merit found in him a rival, who did them honour by his hatred, and who considered their disgrace as his glory. Dionysius Miletus and Favorinus are proofs of this. Spart. and Dion.

The first of these he made a Roman knight, and gave him the government of a province, and obtained his admission into the academy at Alexandria. After this, Adrian was hurt with his high reputation, and, in order to mortify him, raised his rival Heliodorus, and made him his secretary. Dionysius's philosophy was not proof against this provocation; Examples of Dionysius of Miletum and Favorinus. Philost. l. 22. and Dio.

3

* That academy was called the Musæum. One may consult the ancient History of Rollin. T. VII. p. 325, &c.

† The expression in the text may signify, that the academics in their turn proposed questions to Adrian, which he resolved. M. Tillemont has followed their sense.

cation: "The emperor," says he, to Heliodorus, "may give you what employment and money he "pleases, but he can never make you an orator." Adrian was much offended at this; he dismissed him entirely, and if he did not push his resentment further, it was owing to the other's great care in not furnishing him with an opportunity.

Phil. Soph. l. 8. & Dio. Favorinus ran still greater risks; things were carried to a kind of open enmity, insomuch that he reckons it among the singularities of his fortune to have been at war with the emperor, and yet to find himself alive. I know not whether the occasion of this difference was the contempt he had shown for astrology, with which Adrian was infatuated. We have, in Aulus Gellius, an extract of that philosopher's discourse, where the folly of that dangerous chimera is set in a clear light, and destroyed by solid arguments. However that may be, without the greatest circumspection Favorinus had felt the worst effects of this prince's passion. Being one day reproved by Adrian for an expression, which, however, was a proper one, and supported by the best authorities, he gave up the point, and took the censure patiently; and when some of his friends, as he came from the conversation, upbraided him for yielding improperly, and for not availing himself of his advantage, "What "are you thinking of," says he? "Would you have "a man, with thirty legions at his command, in "the wrong?"

Philostr. & Dio. There was an affair excited against him, in which the emperor took part: The city of Arles, the place of his nativity, having chosen him pontiff, he wanted to be excused from the office, and pretended that his character of philosopher exempted him from it: this dispute became a regular action at law, and Favorinus well knew it must be troublesome to him in the issue, and that he must expect the worst usage; he therefore prevented sentence being passed, and, presenting

presenting himself to the audience, "Gentlemen," says he, "I have seen this night in a dream my "master Dion Chrysostom, who has ordered me, "as a good citizen, to serve my country; I sub- "mit, and obey the call." With the same temper he bore the insult offered him by the Athenians, who, knowing he stood ill with the emperor, were highly pleased to have it in their power to gratify their resentment against him without any danger, and pulled down a statue of brass which had been erected for him in their city. Favorinus, without discovering the least emotion, spoke coolly to this purpose, "Socrates would have thought himself happy to have got off so well." After this manner this artful sophist, always attentive to furnish no handle against him, allayed the storm, and secured his own quiet.

He banishes, and then puts to death, the architect Apollodorus. Dio.

Apollodorus, the architect, had reason to repent his not following the same policy. He had excelled in his profession, and given proofs of it. Trajan's palace in Rome, and the bridge over the Danube, were the work of this great master. Great talents naturally beget confidence, and Apollodorus spoke with great freedom and authority. One day, as Trajan entertained himself with him upon the plan of some building, Adrian entered into the conversation, and, desiring to give his opinion upon the matter, Apollodorus bluntly told him not to judge of what he did not understand: "Go," says he, "and paint your gourds;" for Adrian had a little before painted a landscape of which he was proud. Much the same kind of adventure happened to Alexander with Apelles, and that conqueror had candour and good humour enough not to take it amiss. Adrian was not so generous. As he valued himself upon his progress in all the arts, he imagined his glory was sullied by Apollodorus's freedom, and did not forgive it; however, he employed him in the beginning of his reign; but, in a

little time, he sought a pretence for ruining him, and so he was banished. This is not all. Adrian, having built a temple in honour of Venus and the city of Rome, a pretended goddess, whose worship was already established, he sent the plan of it to Apollodorus in his banishment, with a view to insult him, by showing him that a fine structure could be erected without his assistance, and willing at the same time to have him confess it, he desired his opinion of it. It was a noble building, and, when Constans came to Rome, was one of that prince's objects of admiration; but it had great faults. Apollodorus, whom banishment had not taught to dissemble, answered Adrian, that he should have made it larger and higher, in order to have rendered it a more beautiful point of view to the sacred street. He added, that the statues of the goddesses which had been represented sitting were not proportioned to the niches, and, if they stood erect, they would break their heads against the roof. Adrian was so much the more mortified with these observations as they were just, and the faults such as could not be rectified, and, through a mean cowardly resentment, put the honest architect to death.

Spart. 19.

He knows no bounds in his friendship and hatred. Spart. 15.

This prince could never observe the true medium. If he liked a person, he became so very familiar as to forget his rank. He challenged at prose and poetry orators and poets, who had the honour of being in his good graces; when afterwards he came to hate them, he run into the other excess; if he did not shed their blood, he ruined their reputations. That Heliodorus, whom, out of despite to Dionysius of Miletum, he had raised, he afterwards defamed in his severe satires.

He carries his envy even to the glory of the dead.

It was always his envy which embroiled him with those he at first loved. That passion was so prevalent in him, that it discharged itself upon the ancient heroes of literature, objects of universal esteem.

esteem. Jealous of their glory, he endeavoured to sully it. Antimacus of Colophon, a poet little known now, on whom Quintilian bestows some commendations, he preferred to Homer. The eloquence of Cato the elder he ranked above that of Cicero, and Sallust he made give place to one Celius Antipater, who first among the Romans began to throw off the rubbish of history. He did not reflect that these wrong judgments, far from hurting the reputations he attacked, only affected his own, and plainly discovered his ill-natured envy and bad taste. Cicero de Orat. II. 54.

He dared even to attack the reputation of his predecessors that were most beloved, and he would have Titus to pass for a parricide, who had poisoned Vespasian that he might succeed him the sooner; but the malice of such a suspicion has fallen upon the calumniator himself. Dio. Vespas. p. 759.

Such is the effect of the extravagant passion for glory. Great men of real abilities are only concerned about doing good, and suffer the honour to follow the merit. Adrian courted it as his first object, and failed in the pursuit. He was so passionately fond of it as to be the trumpet of his own praise. He wrote memoirs of his life, and published them under the name of Phlegon his freedman.

Men of learning were not the only persons that suffered from Adrian's jealous temper. He became terrible to those of his friends whom he had raised to dignities, from whom he therefore thought he had somewhat to fear. Spartian names several to whom this prince's friendship was but a forerunner and an occasion of the cruellest disgrace. I shall only instance in Tatian and Martius Turbo. He persecuted all his friends. Spart. 15.

Adrian was under the greatest obligation to Tatian, who had been his tutor, and who, together with Plotina, had raised him to the empire. So at first he was grateful. He made him pretorian prefect, and gave him great power; but at last he became suspicious of his influence, and thought of Tatian proscribed. Spart. 9, 15, and 8.

ridding

ridding himself of him by having him stabbed. If he did not persist in that resolution, it was because, knowing how much the death of four consular persons at the beginning of his reign had rendered him odious, he was afraid of raising the public hatred to a greater height, by showing himself so cruelly ungrateful to a man to whom he owed his all. It is true, that Tatian's conduct was far from being blameless; his fraudulent intrigues in regard to Adrian's pretended adoption, the bloody counsels which he gave him, of which I have spoken elsewhere, do not incite us to form a favourable opinion of him. But these were not the motives which raised Adrian's passion against him; and the crime with which he is charged, of forming too ambitious projects, and of carrying his views even to the empire, is not proved in history. Adrian was weary of him, and, having undertaken to ruin him, he resolved to begin with depriving him of his office of pretor, which made him too powerful. He, therefore, threw so many disagreeable things in his way, that at last Tatian offered to resign, and desired leave to retire. The emperor covered his minister's disgrace with the dignity of senator; he even made him consul, imitating, it seems, in this, the artful behaviour of Tiberius to Sejanus*. But all this show of power, without any, ended in an accusation where Tatian was cast. He was proscribed; that is to say, condemned to banishment.

Martius Turbo disgraced. Spart. 9. and 15.

Adrian appointed Martius Turbo his successor; a man of superior merit, whom he had already employed in the war against the Jews, and who was afterwards made prefect of the Daci, with remarkable privileges. Turbo being raised to the post of pretorian

* We find, in the consular annals under Adrian, one Titian, a consul, whose name, it is probable, should be turned into Tatian. I suppose, with Casaubon, that in Spartian we should read *Tatianum*, and not *Titianum, ut conscium tyrannidis, et argui passus est et proscribi.*

pretorian prefect, made no alteration in his way of proceeding; he preserved the same severity and modesty; he discharged the duties of his office with great care and diligence; he passed the whole day with the emperor, and was often at his business before midnight; his weak and bad state of health could not make him keep at home and take rest; and Adrian having once exhorted him to take more care of himself, he answered him, "The pretorian prefect should die standing;" an expression taken from Vespasian. We are not told what could give Adrian a dislike and mistrust of so valuable a subject, except the fickle humour of the prince he served.

His colleague Similis profited by his example; he was an excellent officer, who distinguished himself early; and, when he was only a centurion, had gained the attention of Trajan. This prince had so great a value for him, that one day he took him into his cabinet even before the pretorian prefects. Similis, instead of valuing himself upon this flattering mark of favour, found his modesty hurt with it: "It is not proper," says he to the emperor, "that you should have a conference with a centu-"rion, whilst the pretorian prefects are waiting at the door!" He was afterwards by Adrian put into that office himself, which he had known so well how to respect, but he did not keep it long; he was willing to be beforehand with the unsteadiness of the prince, and desired his dismission whilst he was yet in favour; he obtained it, though not without difficulty; and, having retired to his country-house, he gave up the last seven years of his life to a sweet repose. When he died, he ordered this epitaph to be put upon his tomb: "Here lies "Similis, who passed threescore and sixteen years "upon earth, and lived but seven!"

Similis retires. Spart. 9. and Dio.

Adrian made Septicius Clarus, well known by Pliny's letters, pretorian prefect in his stead. He did

did not continue in his office longer than his predecessor, but he deserved his disgrace as well as Suetonius, who was the prince's secretary. The fact is this:

Bad proceedings of Adrian to his wife. Disgrace of Septicius Clarus and Suetonius. Spart. 2. 23.

Adrian and his wife lived very ill together; they mutually hated one another, and both had reason. Adrian accused Sabina of a troublesome and untractable disposition; Sabina complained of Adrian as inflexibly severe; without any political considerations, a marriage so very unsuitable could not have long subsisted: and Adrian freely declared, that, had he been a private person, he would certainly have put Sabina away; but, knowing his weak title to the empire, he was desirous to strengthen it with the rights of Trajan's niece. He therefore kept her, but treated her so unkindly, that at last, by his continual vexations, she chose a voluntary death, if indeed she was not poisoned.

An empress, despised and hated by her husband, was not much respected by those of the court. Adrian even carried his indignities so far as to order them designedly to affront her, and to show her every mark of contempt; but he would not that any should exceed his orders, nor that they should be wanting in respect to his wife, unless they had his commission for so doing. It was this which led Septicius, Suetonius, and many others, into a fatal mistake. They affected to enter into the passion of their prince, and imagined they should please him in not waiting for his orders before they behaved themselves rudely to his empress. Their mean and cruel flattery was punished by the very man they hoped to please; Adrian removed them from their places, and appointed them successors.

Of all the persons with whom this prince was intimately connected, I find none but Plotina to whom he was steady in his gratitude. He loved her whilst alive, and after her death he mourned for her nine days. He built a temple to her memory, and composed

Dio.

composed hymns in her praise. In the article of pleasure, there were no lengths which he did not go. History reproaches him with adulterous indulgences, where he payed no attention even to the honour of his friends. The looseness of his morals did not stop there; though he did not value himself in taking Trajan for a model, yet he imitated him but too much in the most unnatural debaucheries. Antinous has immortalized Adrian's disgrace on this head.

Adrian's extravagant debaucheries. Antinous. Spart. 2. and 14. Dio. and Aurel. Vict.

That young man attended the emperor in his voyages, and perished through his barbarous superstition, to whom he had been the object of criminal pleasure. Adrian, given up to every kind of divination, magic not excepted, imagined, that there was wanting a voluntary victim, who would freely give up his life to add to that of his prince, or for some other impious motive of superstition; Antinous offered himself, and was accepted of; so Adrian sacrificed his own idol; and, that he might be all inconsistency and contradiction, he wept like a woman (as the historian expresses it) for him he had sacrificed. Such was the death of Antinous, although Adrian, to conceal his abominable barbarity, has spread a report of a very different kind, and has even put it into his memoirs, to make the public believe that he was drowned in the Nile.

It had been much for this prince's interest and glory to stifle so disgraceful a reflection, but passion never reasons but when it is to gratify itself. Adrian was studious to immortalize, by all sorts of monuments, a name which loaded him with reproach. Antinous died at Besa, a city of Thebaide, upon the Nile, anciently consecrated to a god of that name. Adrian, by his buildings, made a new city of it, and called it Antinople. He built a temple there in honour of Antinous, with priests and prophets, for he would have this god of his creation deliver oracles, and some were really uttered, which Adrian himself

Casaubon. ad Spart. 14.

himself composed. He filled the whole world with statues of Antinous, for the veneration of the people. At last, the astronomers having pretended to discover a new star in the heavens, Adrian feigned to believe it was Antinous's soul received among the gods, and the star was called after his name. Pagans themselves laugh at these wretched fooleries; Christians drew a serious and important consequence from it, and justly maintained, that from this new god, whose history was universally known, the rest might be judged of.

Adrian's madpassion for dogs, horses, and hunting.

Whatever Adrian loved, he loved passionately. He erected monuments for his dogs and horses, and we have still the epitaph which he composed for his horse Boristhenes, which he had often used in hunting. He was fond of that exercise, and had he kept within any bounds, we might have applauded his taste, and, with Pliny, have made it a subject of panegyric; but he was so very keen a sportsman as to expose himself to many very ill accidents: in one chace he broke his collar-bone, and in another he hurt his leg so much, as he thought he must have been a cripple. Dion, however, observes, that these diversions did not take him off from the weighty affairs of state, nor hurt them in the least.

Idea of Adrian's character.

The different sketches I have endeavoured to draw of Adrian's character, form a picture of strange variety, and even of contradictions. In this prince there centered very opposite qualities; he was gay and grave, haughty and affable, impetuous and circumspect, frugal even to avarice, and liberal, cruel, and merciful. It is very difficult to make one entire piece of so very discordant parts. I imagine, however, we shall not be mistaken, if we consider his vices as real, his virtues as fictitious. Political interest and vanity were the principles of all the good he did; and these motives, assisted by an uncommon genius improved with the most useful parts of knowledge, were sufficient to render him a

prince

prince whose government was for the good of the people in general, whilst his personal conduct made him a scourge to those who were near him. The remarkable events of his reign, so far as we know them, are but few. His voyages, and some warlike commotions of little consequence, if we except the revolt of the Jews, are all that remain to be related.

SECT. II.

Adrian's voyages. He does not visit his own country. He comes into Gaul and Germany. In Great Britain he builds a wall, to stop the incursions of the Barbarians. Troubles in Egypt about Apis. Adrian at Terragona. He quells some warlike commotions in Mauritania. A short description of the rest of his voyages. Adrian's letter concerning Egypt. The Athenians loaded with favours. His severity against governors who abused their power. His pacific conduct with foreign kings and nations. Revolt of the Jews. Barcochebas. The rebels are overcome and extirpated in three years. The Jews forbid ever entering into Jerusalem but upon the anniversary-day of the taking of their city. A new city built upon the ruins of Jerusalem, with the name of Ælia Capitolina. The great merit of Julius Severus, the conqueror of the Jews.

Adrian's voyages. He does not visit his native country. Spart. 17. Dio. p. 792.

ADRIAN, finding it difficult to fix his restless genius in one place, and desirous to see with his own eyes whatever he had read in books of the most famous places of the world, travelled from taste and curiosity. It is remarkable, that when he was in all the different provinces of the empire, he did not visit Italica, the city which gave him birth. Perhaps he was afraid of meeting with relations whose mean condition might disgrace his imperial dignity: however, he was not ungrateful to his mother-

mother-country, and honoured it with several valuable privileges.

He comes into Gaul and Germany. A. R. 871. Spart. 10, 11, 12, and 13.

He began his travels the third * or fourth year of his reign, and came first into Gaul, where he displayed great liberality; from thence it was natural to go into Germany, where the Romans kept upon the Rhine the greatest army of the empire. There Adrian reformed or preserved the military discipline with that vigour and superiority of parts which I have had occasion to observe elsewhere.

In Great Britain he builds a wall to stop the incursions of the barbarians.

From the banks of the Rhine he transported himself into Great Britain, but with no view of making conquests; he was more desirous to preserve than to acquire. He did not so much as propose to settle things on the footing in which Agricola had left them. That general had penetrated to the most northern parts of the island; but after his departure, it appears the barbarians recovered a great part of the country he had taken from them. Adrian only attended to the securing of the southern part, and guarding of the Roman province from the incursions of the barbarians; he built a wall or rampart with † a ditch fourscore miles in length, from the mouth of the Tyne near Newcastle to the Solway Firth. The wall which cut off part of the island divided Roman Britain from barbarous Britain.

Adrian made use of the like precaution in several countries, where, for want of natural barriers to separate Romans from barbarians, he drew lines faced with a rampart, where they stuck great boughs of trees, the branches whereof were wrapt together.

Upon

* The year of Rome 871 agrees with the third and fourth years of Adrian's reign. It was in this year 871 of Rome that this prince began his voyages, according to the opinion which appeared most probable to Tillemont. We follow the authority of so good a guide.

† I make use of this alternative, because authors differ, or speak some of a wall, others of a rampart. The work undoubtedly partook of both, and there was at least a part built of stone. See Cellar. Geogr. Ant. L. II. c. 4.

Upon his return to Gaul, Adrian heard of the commotions which had happened in Egypt about the god Apis. That pretended god, the disgrace of human understanding, was not always present to the prayers of his worshippers; he was to have very singular marks, and often, when Apis died, there was a considerable time before a successor could be found. At the time I speak of, there had been one found after many years, and the Egyptian cities disputed with great fury who should have the honour of having this ridiculous divinity: the commotions, however, were not carried to any great lengths, and we may conjecture they were quickly appeased, since they did not interrupt the course of Adrian's voyages, for he went and passed the winter at Terragona in Spain.

Troubles in Egypt about Apis. See Roll. Anc. Hist. T. I.

Adrian at Terragona.

He held a general assembly of the deputies of all that province, and, by his discretion and abilities, he put an end to all those difficulties which are occasioned from the levy of troops; a heavy burden, which people never subject themselves to but with great reluctance.

It is likewise remarked, that he rebuilt a temple at Terragona, which had been first built under Tiberius in honour of Augustus, and was fallen into decay.

It is probable that he passed from Spain into Mauritania, where, Spartian relates, he appeased some warlike commotions; and that, in consequence of this, the senate ordered *supplications*, that is, solemn thanksgivings, should be made to the gods in his name. That honour, and the title of emperor, are all the military distinctions with which this prince was adorned.

He appeases commotions in Mauritania.

It is not easy to follow Adrian in the rest of his voyages, nor to fix the dates of the years; we shall content ourselves with observing, that he undertook them at two different times; that, upon his coming out of Mauritania, which we may suppose was in

A short description of the rest of his voyages.

the year of Rome 873, he went to the extremities of the empire in the East; that he returned through Asia, where he ran over all the different provinces; that he came by sea to Greece, and passed the winter at Athens; that he afterwards visited Sicily, and had the curiosity to go to the top of Mount Ætna, to observe from thence the rising of the sun, with the colours of the rainbow, and then returned to Rome in the year 877, the seventh year from his departure.

He did not, however, remain any time in his capital after so long an absence; at the end of two years he took to his old humour, and set out again upon his travels.

Spart. 13. & 22. In the year of Rome 880 he went first into Asia, and was extremely bountiful to the natives. One accidental circumsance raised their affection for him still higher: for five years it had not rained, and the earth was dried up and barren; upon his arrival there fell rain in abundance, a blessing of Heaven, of which the emperor had the honour from the multitude.

He returned the same year to Rome, and immediately set out for the East. He traverses Asia anew, comes into Syria, visits Arabia and Palestine, from whence he passes into Egypt in the 883d year of Rome.

It was during his stay in this country that Antinous's death happened, which we spoke of before. He was much displeased with the manners and dispositions of the Egyptians, and in particular of the inhabitants of Alexandria, who indeed have an ill character in Greek and Roman antiquity. Vopiscus has preserved a letter of Adrian's to his brother-in-law Servian, where the vices of that nation are described in a very lively and pathetic manner. The Christians are much abused in it, but the imputations which Adrian brings against them are too fully confuted

futed by our annals to create any uneasiness; and as otherwise this letter contains some curious particulars, I will insert it entire.

"Adrian, emperor, to Servian, consul, health. "You gave me great commendations of Egypt, "my dear Servian. I have studied it. I know it "by heart, and have discovered nothing but levity, "inconstancy, caprice, and a readiness to change "with the wind. The worshippers of Serapis are "Christians, and those who are called bishops of "Christ worship Serapis. There is not a chief of "a synagogue, or a Christian priest, who is not at "the same time an astrologer or a soothsayer, and "a quack-doctor. Even the patriarch of the Jews, "when he comes into Egypt, is compelled by "some to offer incense to Christ, and by others to "Serapis. They are a most inconsiderate seditious "race. The city of Alexandria is rich and power-"ful, with great trade, which produces plenty. "Nobody is idle there: some blow glass, others "make paper; many are employed about linen, "and making of clothes; all have some trade, "even though they have the gout in their hands "or their feet; the very blind have some labour "assigned them, suitable to their condition. All, "whether Jews or Christians, acknowledge but one "God their interest. I wish that this city, by its "grandeur and riches the first of all Egypt, was "furnished with better inhabitants. Nothing equals "their ingratitude: I have granted them every "thing they could desire; I have restored their an-"cient privileges, I have given them new ones; "in consequence of this, they were grateful to me "when present; but, scarce had I turned my back, "but they instantly attacked my son Verus, and I "believe you know what they have said of Anto-"ninus. All the revenge I wish them is, to feed

" themselves with their chickens which they hatch,
" after a manner I am ashamed to describe *.

" I send you glasses of a changeable colour, which
" a priest of one of their temples gave me for you
" and my sister: but this advice I must give you,
" to take care our friend Africanus be not tempted,
" with their beauty, to use them too often."

Adrian was not satisfied with knowing Lower Egypt; he visited Thebes, where Antinous died, and he would likewise see Cyrenaic Lybia. He returned into Syria, whence, taking his route towards the West, he went again to Athens, and came to Rome in the year 886, having employed, in his second voyage, almost seven years, as he had done in his first.

It seems to me very remarkable, that the sovereign of so great an empire was not afraid to go so far from the seat of government, and that for so long a time, spending whole years upon the sea-coasts, and sometimes in the neighbourhood of the Nile and the Euphrates. It is undoubtedly a proof of Adrian's great understanding and art of government, that such a long absence never occasioned any domestic disturbances, or seditions in the army.

In the course of these voyages Adrian did a great many memorable actions, as well in the empire as out of it.

The Athenians loaded with favours. Dio. & Spart. 13. 20. Eus. Chron. & Scalig.

He loaded the Athenians with his favours, and gave them money and yearly provisions of corn; he so embellished their city as to make it a new one, insomuch that an inscription related by Scaliger declares that Athens was no longer the city of Theseus, but of Adrian, and indeed one quarter of Athens took that emperor's name. He gave likewise

* They hatch them in an oven; an ingenious and useful discovery, which should not be mentioned with the disdain of this letter, and which begins to succeed by the care of a famous naturalist in our days.

wise to the Athenians the island of Cephalonia; and with his liberalities they built, in the isle of Delos, a little colony, which they called Adrian's new Athens. They repaid his benefits by the honours they did his name, and they established a new tribe, called the Adrianidæ, after the example of that formerly erected in honour of Attalus king of Pergamus. They desired of him a reformation of their laws, and he digested a new code, which was a collection of the best laws of Draco and Solon, their ancient lawgivers, and of other sages of antiquity. By one of those laws, senators were forbid farming any part of the public revenue, either in their own name or in that of others. I have said, that in the visit which he made to the provinces, he displayed his liberality, by giving them every kind of assistance, and by building useful works for the public. He no less signalized his rigid justice against their intendants who abused their power; he obliged them to give an account of their conduct, and if he found them faulty, he punished them without mercy: some have gone so far as to suspect that he himself raised up accusers against them; a practice unbecoming the candour of a prince, but what one of Adrian's character perhaps was not incapable of.

Severity against intendants who abused their power. Spart. 13.

His conduct in regard to foreign princes and nations had always peace for its object, and the avoidance of war; or, if it could not be prevented, to put an end to it as soon as possible.

His pacific conduct to foreign kings and people. Spart. 12, 13.

Chosröes king of the Parthians, who remembered what he had suffered from the Romans, was resolved to be revenged, and prepared for war; but Adrian, who had already abandoned all Trajan's conquests, soon pacified him by restoring his daughter, who had remained a prisoner with the Romans: he promised likewise to restore to him the golden throne, taken by Trajan from the Parthians; and though this promise was never performed, peace

Capit. T. Anton. 9.

was nevertheless preserved between the two empires.

Dio.

The Alans, a people of Scythia, after ravaging Media and Armenia, had marched into Cappadocia; there they found Arrian, the governor of that province, ready to receive them. They were terrified at the strength, good order, and courage of the Roman army which faced them, and, without hazarding a battle, retired, and their threats vanished into air.

The other barbarous nations and kings on the borders of the empire, towards the Euphrates, Euxine and Caspian seas, lived in good terms with Adrian. He made them presents, and received others in return. Some of those kings were subject to the Roman empire, and history mentions several established by Adrian along the Euxine sea; others, more powerful, cultivated the emperor's friendship. Pharasmanes the Iberian, who at first assumed haughty airs, changed his conduct, and came to Rome to compliment Adrian: Vologesus, who had been king of Armenia, chose him for arbiter of his differences with Pharasmanes: the kings of Bactria sent him ambassadors: from the banks of the Danube, the Sarmatian Jazyges desired a strict alliance with the Romans: so, though Adrian's conduct was weak in regard to foreign affairs, the Roman grandeur supported itself, and was respected under a prince but ill qualified to support its rights and dignities.

I shall observe, with regard to the ambassadors from Vologesus and the Jazyges, a very remarkable trace of the republican constitution still subsisting in the Roman government; these ambassadors were introduced by Adrian to the senate, and he, by the resolution of the senators, was charged to give them a proper answer.

Revolt of the Jews. Dio. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. IV. 6. and Chron.

We beheld this intractable and restless nation, in the end of Trajan's reign, raising great disturbances, which were not thoroughly quelled till the second year

year of Adrian. Repressed, but not subdued, the Jews had a strong disposition to revolt. The hopes of a Messiah, who would deliver them from the Roman yoke, still reigned in their minds, even after the times mentioned by the prophets for the coming of Christ were expired; and the sight of the holy places, profaned by the Roman colony which Adrian began to settle there, worked up their impatience and wrath to a degree of fury. It is not to be doubted but a great number of Jews had repeopled the ruins of Jerusalem. Their attachment to that city (the glory of their nation, and the centre of their worship) was extreme, and the ruins of the houses, walls, and temple, furnished them with materials for building. These new habitations, perhaps, first gave occasion to Adrian's thought of sending a colony there to keep the Jews in subjection, and to secure the peace of the country. He called it Ælia Capitolina, that it might carry his family name and the surname of Jupiter, to whom he had erected a temple in the place where that of the true God had stood. He caused these works to be carried on whilst he went into Egypt, and afterwards into Syria. Such a profanation filled the Jews with horror; nevertheless they dissembled whilst the emperor was in their neighbourhood, only they made use of a device to furnish themselves with arms. They were ordered to make them for the Romans, and they designedly made them bad, that they might be rejected, and so remain with them. After Adrian was gone at a distance on his return to Rome, they discovered themselves, and revolted.

At first they had not forces enough to keep the field, and to form camps and armies; but they cantoned themselves in the most advantageous posts in the country, building forts, and digging subterraneous places which communicated with one another, with openings to let in fresh air and the light. They came out of these holes, like wild

beasts, to cut the throat of such Romans as they could surprise, and then they retired to their dark asylums. The first clandestine enterprise succeeding, the number of rebels increased, and all Judea was quickly in arms.

At the head of these factious people was a chief worthy of such furies, Barcochebas, a robber by profession, who gave himself out for the Messiah, without other title than the interpretation of his own name; it signifies *son of a star*, and he pretended Balaam's prophecy was fulfilled in him. This impostor, the more effectually to abuse his countrymen's credulity, renewed the artifice formerly used by Eunus, the head of the revolted slaves in Sicily, and, putting burning tow into his mouth, he appeared to vomit fire. He assembled under his standard numerous troops, and with them ravaged Judea and Syria; cruel to all, but more particularly to the Christians, who equally refused to renounce Jesus Christ, or to revolt against the prince whom Providence had set over them.

The contagion had already spread far; all the Jews dispersed through the world were in motion; even strangers, allured with the hopes of gain and plunder, joined them, and the spirit of revolt once taking fire in Judea, became a general conflagration, which threatened the whole empire.

The rebels conquered, and exterminated in a war of three years.

The Romans had neglected the first commotions of the Jews, as not deserving notice. The danger, which they had suffered to increase, rouzed them. Adrian gave so proper orders in all the provinces, that there was no open rebellion but in Judea; and, to go to the root of the evil, he despatched a re-enforcement of troops to Tinnius Rufus, who commanded in Judea, and he called from Britain Julius Severus, an able officer, whom he intrusted with the general conduct of the war.

The rebel army was so formidable, and their courage so furious, that Severus did not think proper

per to give them battle; he chose rather to proceed more securely; he spread his numerous troops over the whole country, and, having thereby obliged the enemy to divide themselves into several bodies, he attacked them by platoons, carried off parties of them, cut off their provisions, and shut them up in their castles, which he afterwards besieged and took by storm, giving no quarter, but destroying men, women, and children; thus he took from them and destroyed fifty fortified places, and nine hundred and fourscore considerable towns and villages. It is a problem among the learned, whether *Jerusalem was one of the many cities taken at this time, and whether, under Adrian, it suffered its final destruction; so much appears certain, that, being entirely dismantled by Titus, and the repairing it only begun when the Jews revolted, it was still an open place, and consequently could be of little use in that war; accordingly, it is not mentioned at all in some authors, and in others very slightly, with few or no circumstances.

The most renowned exploit in all that war was the siege of Bitther, which Eusebius places in the eighteenth year of Adrian. Bitther was a very strong town near Jerusalem, and the rebels, when they were driven from other retreats, shut themselves up there; they defended themselves like men in despair, suffering all the extremities of hunger and thirst. It is nowhere said that their miseries brought them to surrender, and it is more probable that their rage determined them not to be taken but by force. It appears that Barcochebas perished there, either in fighting, or by way of punishment, in case he fell into the hands of the conquerors.

The taking of Bitther put an end to the war, or at least deprived the Jews of their last resource, and furnished the Romans with an opportunity of completing

* Scaliger denies it, but Tillemont is for the affirmative.

pleting their victory by an entire desolation of their country. In this war, which may have lasted almost three years, from the year 885 to 887, five hundred and fourscore thousand Jews perished by the sword; it is impossible to tell the number of those who ended their miserable days by hunger, sickness, or fire; all those who escaped this shocking disaster were sold as slaves, and carried away into foreign countries, so that Judea was almost entirely deserted.

The Romans likewise lost a great many men in the several operations of the war, and the victory must have been dearly purchased, if what Dion reports be true, that Adrian, when he wrote to the senate, forbore using the common style of emperors: *If you and your children are well, I congratulate you; as for me and my army, we are in good condition.*

The destruction of the Jews under Adrian was complete; they not only did not recover themselves, but any attempts they made to throw off the yoke were but trifling, and without effect.

Adrian, to prevent their revolting, used a proper precaution; which was this, to forbid them the very sight of Jerusalem, where they were not permitted to enter but on one day of the year, the anniversary of the destruction of the city. St Jerome admirably well describes their assembling on that melancholy day, their wretched lamentations, and the severities they suffered from the guards placed at every avenue. He was an eye-witness of all this, for he dwelt there; these are his own words: "The "* treacherous husbandmen," says he, alluding to the

The Jews forbid entering Jerusalem but upon the anniversary day for taking the city.

* Perfidi coloni, post interfectionem servorum, et ad extremum Filii Dei, excepto planetu, prohibentur ingredi Jerusalem; et, ut ruinam suæ eis flere liceat civitatis, pretio redimunt; ut, qui quondam emerant sanguinem Christi, emant lacrymas suas, et ne fletus quidem eis gratuitus sit. Videas in die quo capta est à Romanis et diruta Jerusalem, venire populum lugubrem, con-

fluere

the parable in the gospel, "after having slain the "servants, and likewise the Son of God, are ex- "cluded from the vineyard. The entering into Je- "rusalem is forbid them but upon the day of sad- "ness and lamentation. They must even pay for "the liberty of weeping over the ruins of their city, "and as formerly they purchased with money the "blood of Christ, they are now obliged to pay for "their own tears, which they must not shed with- "out a price. Once a year, on the day their city "was taken and destroyed by the Romans, multi- "tudes are seen sunk in grief—men and women, "loaded with years, and covered with rags, who, "in their persons and every thing about them, "carry evident marks of the wrath of God. Whilst "the cross upon which our Lord suffered shines "upon Mount Calvary, and the church, erected "upon the tomb out of which he arose from the "dead, glitters with gold and precious stones, and "the standard placed upon Mount Olivet attracts "the eyes of all; this people, as undeserving of "compassion as they are wretched, bewail the loss "of their temple. Before they have yet done with "their miserable cries, and whilst the women, tear- "ing their hair, beat their breasts with repeated "blows, immediately comes a soldier, who de- "mands money of them, if they would have the "liberty of weeping any longer."[5]

A new city built upon the ruins of Jerusalem, with the name of Ælia Capitolina.

After this victory, Adrian resumed his design of rebuilding Jerusalem, or rather he built a new city, as I have said before, which he named Ælia Capitolina, the walls of which enclosed Mount Calvary, and

fluere decrepitas mulierculas, et senes pannis annisque obsitos, in corporibus et in habitu suo iram Domini demonstrantes—et patibulo Domini coruscante, ac radiante ἀναβάσει ejus, de Oliveti quoque monte crucis fulgente vexillo, plangere ruinas templi sui populum miserum, et tamen non esse miserabilem. Adhuc fletus in genis, et livida brachia, et sparsi crines; et miles mercedem postulat, ut illis flere plus liceat.—*Hieronym. in Sophon. c.* 2.

and the holy sepulchre which was not included in the ancient city, but did not take in Mount Sion. In the execution of this plan, he studiously profaned all the places, which had been most revered by Jews and Christians, with buildings set apart for the worship of idols; he built a temple in honour of Jupiter Capitolinus upon the mountain where had stood that of the true God; he placed a hog of marble upon the gate of the city which looked towards Bethlehem; he erected, in the place where Jesus Christ was crucified, a statue of Venus, and, in that where he arose from the dead, a statue of Jupiter; in the grottos at Bethlehem, where our Saviour was born, he established the worship of Adonis.

The emperor's efforts succeeded against the Jews, whom God had abandoned. Banished from Jerusalem, they have never again entered it, nor have they ever been able to rebuild their temple. Mount Sion, left without the walls of the city, has been no longer inhabited, and from that time has been put to no other use than the producing of cucumbers, and other kinds of pulse, as was predicted by
Isa. xviii. the prophet Isaiah; whereas Christianity, which God protects, continues flourishing in this new city of Adrian, with this difference only, that till then the Christian church of Jerusalem was composed of Jewish converts, but is now a church of Gentiles, of which Mark was the first bishop. And, within less than two years, the idols which Adrian had put in the places where Christ's principal mysteries were fulfilled, were all destroyed. The piety of Christian emperors, in order to perpetuate the remembrance of them, have raised and consecrated edifices, and, even to our days, the holy places have all the proper honours shown to them.

The eminent merit of Julius Severus, conqueror of the Jews.

There remains nothing more for me to say of the Jewish war but this, that Julius Severus, who conquered them, was as excellent a magistrate as an officer. After he had settled Judea in peace, he

was

was sent to govern Bithynia; and there he managed the affairs of the public, and of individuals, with so much justice and prudence, that his memory was dear to that province more than fourscore years afterwards. This is testified by Dion, a Bithynian by birth.

SECT. III.

Adrian's sickness. He adopts Verus. The birth and character of Verus. Adrian puts to death Servian, and Fuscus, grandson of Servian, and many others. The death of the empress Sabina. Verus is made pretor and twice consul. He languishes some time, and dies. Adrian adopts in his room Titus Antoninus. History of Antoninus till his adoption. Adrian, tormented with a long sickness, wants to despatch himself. Antoninus puts it out of his power. He saves many senators, whom Adrian would have put to death. Adrian's death. With great difficulty Antoninus obtains of the senate that Adrian should be ranked with the gods. A judgment of Adrian. The state of learning in his reign.

ADRIAN was upon his return to Italy when the war with the Jews was concluded. He went out of it no more; a long illness, which at last brought him to his grave, put a stop to his unsettled courses, and obliged him to rest. All his life he had been subject to frequent bleeding at the nose; a violent loss of blood, followed by a dropsy, rendered him quite an invalid; and he himself, not without reason, considered it as a summons of death. The danger he saw himself in of losing his life, souring his temper, made him cruel, or discovered his natural disposition to be so, and at the same time was a powerful motive for appointing a successor.

Adrian's sickness. Spart. Adr. et Æl. Ver. Dio.

He

He adopts Verus.

He never had any children; and Sabina his wife, whom he detested, made no scruple to declare she had industriously avoided being a mother, for fear a child of Adrian's should be a scourge to the world. Obliged, therefore, to choose a successor, he cast his eye upon several persons; he thought of Servian, his brother-in-law, though he was eighty years of age; of Fuscus, grandson of Servian, and of some others. After deliberating a long time, he made a remarkable choice, disagreeable to every body, and the worst he could make; he adopted L. Ceionius Commodus, son-in-law to Nigrinus, who had formerly conspired against him. Commodus, upon his adoption, added to his own name that of Ælius Cæsar; he is also called, and more generally, *Verus*, without our being able to say whence he took that name, which, however, we shall use as the most known.

Birth and character of Verus.

It was not from his birth that any reflection could be brought against Verus; though the first mention of the name of Ceionius in history does not go higher than the last years of Augustus's reign, and, at the time of Verus's disaster in Germany, the family of the new Cæsar, ancient in Etruria, had been illustrious in Rome; his grandfather, great-grandfather, and many of his ancestors, by the mother's side, had been consuls; so Verus's family was superior to Adrian's himself, or Trajan's; but his manners rendered him unworthy of the supreme power, and his health made him incapable of it.

With a good countenance, and a person well made, he was softer and more effeminate than even the female sex; he had contrived a bed with four bolsters, and curtains of the finest linen, spread over with roses, the white part whereof he caused to be taken away, as being too hard; he was dressed with lilies, and his body was perfumed with the finest aromatics; his table and table-seats were covered with lilies and roses; his behaviour was answerable to his voluptuous effeminacy; he had a great number of concubines,

concubines, and, when his wife complained, he had the assurance to tell her, the name of a wife was only a title of honour, but that he sought pleasure elsewhere. Ovid's most licentious poems were his common reading; and Martial, a poet void of all modesty, was his Virgil. It was undoubtedly this life of pleasure which gave occasion to the reports, true or false, which were current, that his handsome figure, and criminal complaisance for Adrian, were the motives of his adoption.

He valued himself upon the delicacy of his luxury, and upon what he called taste, which frequently is no more than the very essence and food of corruption; he dressed his young slaves like little cupids; he put wings to his couriers, and named them after the winds, calling one Boreas, and another Zephyrus; and, in order to join inhumanity with pride, as too frequently happens, he cruelly harassed them with incessant running.

Verus was equally fond of the pleasures of the table; he had the contemptible honour of inventing, or bringing to perfection, a ragout much valued at that time, and made of a sow's belly, with the flesh of a pheasant, a peacock, and a wild-boar, all enclosed in a pye.

The only thing praise-worthy in Verus was, that he loved letters, had improved his understanding, and wrote well either in verse or prose; a trifling compensation for such a collection of bad qualities, which, had Verus come to the sovereign power, he would have carried to a still greater excess.

The vices of his mind were accompanied with a miserable state of health; he vomited blood, a fatal symptom, which proclaims present weakness and approaching death; nor did he live in such a way as to avert or suspend the effect of so dangerous a disposition.

The choice which Adrian had made of a successor could not fail to breed murmurs; it afforded ample

ample matter of complaint to those who aspired after the honour which Verus, in preference to them, had obtained. There dropt from Servian and Fuscus some marks of their resentment which cost them their lives: Fuscus was charged with attending to some pretended presages, which flattered him with the hopes of the empire; and it was alleged that Servian had given proofs of his ambitious designs, by making presents to the slaves of the palace; by placing himself in the emperor's chair near his bed; by affecting to show the soldiers that, notwithstanding his great age, he was still capable of action; and, upon these frivolous imputations, the grandfather and grandson, the one brother-in-law, the other nephew of the emperor, were condemned to die. Servian, before the execution of his cruel sentence, caused fire to be brought, in which he burnt perfumes; and, lifting up his eyes to Heaven, "O "ye gods," says he, "you know that I am inno- "cent; all the vengeance I pray for is, that Adrian "may wish for death, and not obtain it." If this imprecation was not afterwards invented, it is a kind of prediction which we shall see hereafter accomplished.

Adrian puts to death Servian, Fuscus, grandson of Servian, and many others.

Servian and Fuscus were not the only victims to Adrian's cruelty; he openly or privately sacrificed many others to his jealousies; his natural disposition furnished him with suspicions, and it was a sufficient cause of hatred to have been once considered by him as worthy to fill his place.

It was about the same time the empress ended her unhappy days by a tragical death, being either poisoned or obliged to make away with herself. Her husband, who had been the occasion of it, did not, however, fail to make a goddess of her.

Death of the empress Sabina.

Adrian, when he adopted Verus, distributed among the people and soldiers * four hundred sesterces.

Verus made pretor, and twice consul.

* Fifty millions of French livres.

terces. He made haste to decorate his adoptive son with the pretorship, and more than once named him for consul *. Immediately after his pretorship, he sent him to command in Pannonia, where the new Cæsar acquired some honour, and appeared to have at least a tolerable knowledge of war. Verus, distinguished by his dignities and his command, was likewise in the favour of the cabinet-council; and nothing which he asked, even by letter, was refused him.

He languishes some time, and dies.

In the midst of all this prosperity, his health daily grew worse, and threatened death. Adrian was sensible he was in the wrong to place his hopes upon him, and he discovered his sentiments †: "We have lost," says he, "four hundred millions of "sesterces expended upon Verus; we have trusted "to a tottering wall, which, far from being able "to support the republic, is not able so much "as to sustain even ourselves." And, upon another occasion, alluding to the deification which commonly followed the death of the Cæsars, ‡ "I "have not," says he, "adopted a son, but a god, "whom I add to Heaven."

It is said that he even intended to set aside Verus's adoption, and to make another choice. To me this does not appear improbable, though he was fond of Verus, and seemed to bewail his death. Adrian was of so fickle a disposition, running from one extreme to another, that I am not at all surprised to find he should be sincerely sorry for one whom very possibly he might have forsaken, had

* I speak after Spartian; perhaps, nevertheless, Verus was not adopted when he was made pretor and consul the first time. See the note upon the annals of Adrian's reign.

† Quater millies perdidimus, quod exercitui populoque dependimus; si quidem in caducum parietem incubuimus, et qui non rempublicam, sed nos ipsos sustentare vix possit. *Spart. Adr.* 23. *et. Æl. Ver.* 6.

‡ Ego mihi divum adoptavi, non filium. *Spart. Æl. Ver.* 4.

not death prevented him. Verus was uneasy; the vexation which Adrian's discourse concerning him occasioned, made him still worse; and the disgrace of the pretorian prefect, who was dismissed for reporting to him what he had heard, served to convince him of the truth of what he had been told.

This concern, joined to his disorder, brought him to his grave. He had prepared or learned a speech, to give Adrian thanks in the senate, the first of January. The night before, having taken a medicinal draught to give him ease, he died suddenly of a vomiting of blood; and, perhaps, the remedy he had taken occasioned it. Adrian, though concerned at his death, forbade any public mourning upon account of the intercessions made at that time for the prosperity of the emperor and empire; it was a joyful ceremony which must not be disturbed with any signs of public grief; as to every thing else, Adrian ordered all the honours customary for emperors to be paid to his memory; he placed him among the gods, and had grand statues erected for him in all the different parts of the empire, and in the temples of several cities.

Adrian adopts in his place Titus Antoninus; his history to his adoption. Spart. Adr. 24. et Capit. 1 Ant. 4.

Verus did not enjoy his good fortune three whole years; for he could not have been adopted before the year of Rome 886, and he died the first of January 889. He left a son, whom, we shall find, reigned with M. Aurelius.

The death of Verus was of great advantage to the republic; the empire was not only thereby delivered from a prince who would have rendered it unhappy, but it was the occasion of its having the wisest and most accomplished of all emperors; and it may be said of Adrian, who had many valuable qualities with great faults, that he made amends for all the wrongs he had done the empire by adopting Titus Antoninus.

Antoninus, according to the then established custom, had a variety of names; he was called *Titus Aurelius*,

Aurelius, Fulvius Boionius Antoninus. He acquired the name of Cæsar by his adoption, that of Augustus by his promotion to the throne, and he is indebted to his great and good character for the surname of *Pius*, which implies a good heart, a noble soul, susceptible of friendship and gratitude, especially to his family and country.

It is France which has the glory of giving to Rome, in the person of Antoninus, the best of princes; for it was from the city of Nimes his father's family took its rise.

His two grandfathers were consuls; his father likewise arrived at the same honour; he was allied to all the best families then in Rome; but, what does the principal and most lasting honour to his family is, that virtue was hereditary to it. His father is commended by Spartian for his purity and integrity of manners; and his grandfather by the mother, in the opinion of Pliny the younger, joined the most amiable sweetness of temper to the most distinguished virtues and honours *. "You have "been twice consul," says Pliny in one of his letters to Arrius, "and a consul like to those of the an- "cient republic; you have discharged the procon- "sulate of Asia with a reputation to which (lest I "should hurt your modesty) I will not say no "other has been able to arrive; but, if one can "find among your predecessors two or three who "may have equalled you, it is a great deal: you "rank with the first citizens of Rome by your ir- "reproachable life, and by that regard which is due

2 "to

* Quod semel atque iterum consul suisti, similis antiquis; quod prosonsul Asiæ, qualis ante te, qualis post te vix unus aut alter, (non sinit enim tua verecundia dicere, qualis nemo) quod sanctitate, quod auctoritate, ætate quoque princeps civitatis est quidem venerabile et pulchrum; ego tamen te vel magis in remissionibus miror. Nam severitatem istam pari jucunditate condire, summæque gravitati tantum comitatis adjungere, non minus difficile, quam magnum est. *Plin. IV. ep.* 3.

" to your merit and age; these are the different " titles by which you engage our respects; but I " still admire you more in your hours of recrea- " tion; for to temper that severity of manners, " which is so conspicuous in you, with a gentleness " and ease no less valuable, and to join the graces " to a thorough understanding and a sensible cha- " racter, this, indeed, is rare and difficult, and " what only falls to the share of superior geniuses." This eulogy was well founded; it brings to mind the compliment which Arrius, with so much dignity and good sense, made to his friend Nerva, when he saw him promoted to the empire; and his amuse- ments likewise showed good humour and taste. He employed his leisure hours in composing little pieces of poetry in Greek, in which he displayed such elegance, taste, and delicacy, that, if we be- lieve Pliny, * Athens itself was not more Attic; and the same Pliny, when he had translated them into Latin, acknowledged his version was far short of the beauties of the original.

Titus Antoninus, sprung from so good a race, supported its dignity. Having lost his father when young, and his mother marrying again, he was at first taken care of by his paternal grandfather; and, after his death, Arrius, his mother's father, took him into his house, and finished his education. From his infancy Antoninus discovered a happy disposition, gentle and amiable, showing the proper respect to all his relations; by this means he gained their friendship, and they gave him substantial proofs of it. His father-in-law, that is, his mother's second husband, and many of his cousins and al- lies, made him their heir.

The more he was known, the more he was es- teemed; and, when he came to man's age, there centered

* Non medius fidius ipsas Athenas tam Atticas dixerim.

centered in him every advantage of body and mind which could establish him in the good opinion of the public; a countenance gentle and majestic; an understanding well improved; the art of speaking with dignity and grace; a sweetness in his manner, with great moderation; disinterested and candid; an enemy of all injustice; liberal and beneficent; introducing the taste of the old Romans for agriculture; he ran into no excesses; was void of all affectation; and, in a word, he was formed by nature to every thing he ought to be; and vain glory was to him no motive of action; happy if the light of Christianity, which shone at that time with so great lustre, had taught him to sanctify so many moral virtues by higher and more exalted principles, which ascend even to God himself.

He is commended for lending money at the lowest interest. The laws of Rome permitted usury, and those who were considered as a good sort of men often exacted it with rigour; so they were obliged to Antoninus, for at least setting bounds, so far as regarded himself, to an abuse which he did not consider as unjust. His birth called him to public offices which he discharged with dignity. After his consulship, having gone through all the posts of honour, he from choice spent a great part of the year upon his estates; but, though he was not desirous of showing himself, his great merit would not suffer his being forgotten. Adrian chose him to be one of the four of consular dignity to whom he gave the government of Italy; and he was particularly attentive to assign him that department which was nearest his own estates, that so a person of his worth might serve the public without hurting himself, and find convenience joined to his dignity. In his turn he was proconsul of Asia, and conducted himself so admirably as to outdo the character his grandfather Arrius had acquired in that province. Upon his return from his govern-

ment in Asia, he continued in great favour with Adrian, who frequently called him to his councils; and, the historians observe, in all deliberations he always was of the good-natured side.

Though a man of so great worth, he was far from being happy in his own family. He had married Anna Faustina, a lady of an illustrious birth, but of a behaviour neither becoming herself, nor the prudence and virtue of her husband. He was careful not to discover it, and thought it best to be silent upon the uneasiness he suffered. It did not lessen his affection and regard for his father-in-law Annius Verus; he comforted him in his old age, and assisted him with his arm when he went to the senate; it is said that this pious action procured him the surname of *Pius*, and the adoption of Adrian; but he deserved both for more reasons than one.

He had four children, two sons and two daughters; the sons died very young; the eldest of the two daughters, who had married Lamia Syllanus, died likewise when he set out to his proconsulate of Asia; the second is the famous Faustina, who, being married to Marcus Aurelius, imitated, and even surpassed, the ill example of her mother.

Adrian, after the death of Ælius Verus, being obliged to look out another support for himself as well as the republic, cast his eye upon Antoninus: perhaps he had thought of him even whilst Verus was alive, whose life, he perceived, was not to be depended upon. Antoninus's personal qualities were, undoubtedly, the chief motives which determined Adrian in his choice; but we may suppose alliance had some influence, if it be true, as is pretended to be proved by some medals, that Matidia, Trajan's niece, and sister to the empress Sabina, was Antoninus's aunt.

Spart. Æl. Ver. 2. 6.

Adrian, being resolved, desired Antoninus's consent; and this wise senator took time to consider if he should accept of the first rank in the universe.

When

When all was agreed, the emperor assembled in his palace, where he was generally confined by his infirmities, a great council, to which he summoned the principal senators, and spoke to them thus: "Nature has denied me the satisfaction of heirs of "my blood, you have supplied that want in giving "me one by law; and, perhaps, a free choice by "adoption is better than the chance of birth. Ælius "Verus was such a son as I could have wished; "death has taken him from me, and I have found "a successor, of illustrious birth, worthy of your "government, of an amiable disposition, with a "clear understanding, in the prime of his age, and "from whom you have to fear neither the petu-"lancy of youth, nor the slowness of old age. "From his infancy he has been taught to revere the "laws; and, in the several commands he has been "intrusted with, he has acquitted himself with dis-"cretion, and acquired great experience; so that "he is unacquainted with nothing that concerns the "government of the public affairs, and is able to "make a proper use of his knowledge. These "characters sufficiently point out Aurelius Anto-"ninus, who is here present: I know he is the "most modest of men, and that nothing was more "distant from his thoughts than the promotion I "intend for him; but, in spite of his taste for tran-"quillity, I hope he will not give a denial to my "wants, and those of the state; but that, surmount-"ing natural aversion, he will subject himself to the "burden I impose upon him." It was in this manner that Antoninus was adopted, the twenty-fifth of February, after the death of Verus; and Adrian immediately made him his colleague in the proconsular and tribunitial power.

Adrian makes Antoninus adopt Verus's son, and Marc. Aurel.

As Antoninus had no male issue, Adrian, after the example of Augustus, being desirous to procure several supports for the state, required that he should adopt Verus's son, then little more than seven years old,

old, and M. Annius, who was almost seventeen, and was afterwards the emperor Marcus Aurelius.

It is easy to imagine the reasons which made Adrian desirous that Antoninus should adopt the son of him whom he had himself before adopted, and expressed himself thus: "I am happy (says he) "the republic has at least a branch of Verus*."

History of M. Aurelius to his adoption. Dio. & Capitol. M. Ant. 1—5. & M.Aurel. 1. 1.

Marcus Annius was Adrian's relation; he was Antoninus's wife's nephew, and betrothed to the daughter of Verus Cæsar: but his most powerful recommendations were from himself, a charming character, which discovered the happiest dispositions for wisdom and virtue.

We cannot account with precision how he was related to Adrian; we shall only observe, that he was of Spanish extraction; that his great-grandfather, who was the first of his family that settled in Rome, had for his native country Ucubis, or Succubis, a city of Betica, not far from Italica, the place which gave birth to Adrian; and that it is easy to suppose two families of the same country were allied.

This relation, though we know not its origin, was undoubtedly what first fixed Adrian's attention upon Annius from his infancy: he gave him, when six years old, the rank and title of a Roman knight, and at eight he honoured him with an important priesthood, by admitting him into the college of the Salii; so that the adoption by which he introduced him into the imperial family, was no more than a consequence of that natural affection he had always shown him.

Annius's family might be noble and ancient, and a very illustrious origin is assigned him; but, doubtless, his pretended descent from Numa is entirely chimerical: all that we know of the lustre of his family, goes no farther back than the fourth generation.

* Habeat respublica quodcunque de Vero. *Spart. Æl. Ver. n. 7.*

ration. Annius Verus, his great-grandfather, whom we just mentioned, being arrived from Ucubis to Rome, came to the pretorship: his grandfather, of the same name, carried the splendour of his family still higher, and became a patrician, and was thrice consul and prefect of the city; his father died young, when he was pretor; he had married Domitia Calvilla Lucilla, the daughter of Calvinus Tullus, who was twice consul.

Their son, of whom we are now speaking, was born the twenty-sixth of April, in the year of Rome 892, under his grandfather's second consulate; he was successively adopted by his great-grandfather by the mother, Catilius Severus, and by his grandfather by the father, Annius Verus; so that he, for some time, took the name of Catilius, and afterwards that of his father. It is observed, that the name of Verus suits that candour and love of truth he discovered from his infancy. Adrian thought that even his name was not expressive enough, and he would have him called *Verissimus*, or, *Most true.*

The care of his education fell to his grandfather by the father, to whom, in his philosophical memoirs of himself which he has left us, he acknowledges he was indebted for his generous good-natured sentiments; but, on the other hand, he reckons it as a blessing from Heaven, his not continuing long in the hands of a concubine kept by this grave senator, who might have corrupted the innocency of his manners.

He was instructed in all the arts for the improvement of body and mind; he had masters for grammar, Greek, Latin, eloquence, philosophy, law, mathematics, drawing, dancing, and music; he was also trained up to wrestling, running, and boxing; he was fond of bodily exercises, and noted for them; eloquence and poetry had but few charms for him, and he thanked the gods

gods*, that he had not made great advances therein, because his success in these might have led him to studies he accounted but trifling when compared with philosophy.

It was therefore philosophy, that is, the substantial part of it useful to manners, that engaged all his esteem and affection: naturally grave and serious, he did not lose time in abstract and generally frivolous questions, which serve only for amusement, or to indulge curiosity; he applied himself to what could improve him, rule his passions, and inspire him with a love of every duty; render him more gentle and grateful, more averse to unlawful pleasures, and more disposed to do good to all who should want his assistance. His passion for this excellent philosophy went so far as to induce him to put on the philosophical gown at twelve years old. He even attempted to embrace a life of austerity; he began with lying hard, and it was not without great difficulty that his mother prevailed upon him to lie on a quilt. His unwearied application to his studies, his continual labour, and strict regimen, prejudiced his health; and this is the only fault we find to reproach him with in his youth: he informs us himself that, when he was young, he vomited blood; but the ills which arise from this kind of excess are not the most difficult to cure; he recovered his strength, and, notwithstanding a life of continual labour, he preserved it almost sixty years.

It

* A fondness for the belles-lettres has carried M. Bellet, of the university of Montauban, to endeavour to take off the impression which the disdain shown by M. Aurelius for eloquence and poetry has made. See the mixture of poetry, and literature, and history, by the Acad. of Mont. 1751. The design of that academ[illegible] is commendable, and his interpretations ingenious; but M[illegible]s's expressions appear to me too precise to admit of his [illegible]tion. It is better to allow the fact, and deny the consequ[illegible]. M. Aurelius was a great prince, but we may be allowed to think he carried the rigour of philosophy too far.

It appears that the wise maxims of philosophy were not only laid up in his memory, but they influenced his conduct; he never deviated from them; his manners were irreproachable, or, if he owns that in the heat of youth he was not entirely proof against the power of love, he assures us, at the same time, he very soon threw off its yoke.

With the gravity of a philosopher, he had none of the severity; his address was agreeable and engaging, not only to his friends, but to those he was little acquainted with; he was virtuous without pride, modest without timorousness, grave without melancholy *,

All his masters found him a most grateful scholar; it is true they deserved it; by the account he gives us, it appears that their instructions were not confined to the particular science which they taught, but had it still more at heart to improve his mind, and to form him for all the moral and civil duties; accordingly his affection for them was beyond all example; one of the favours for which he thanks the gods is, that they had put it in his power to discharge himself of the obligations he was under to those who had formed his youth, and to reward them suitably to their respective conditions without loss of time, or making them wait for what they had a right to expect; he honoured them living and dead; he kept their images of gold, with those of his household-gods, in his domestic chapel, and offered up chaplets of flowers and victims at their tombs.

His most celebrated masters were Herodius Atticus, a Greek orator; Cornelius Fronto, a Latin orator; but, above all, Junius Rusticus, who to an illustrious birth joined an hereditary taste for the Stoical philosophy; for he appears to have been grandson to him whom Domitian put to death.

Atticus

* Frugi sine contumacia, verecundus sine ignavia, sine tristitia gravis. *Capit.*

Atticus and Fronto came to be consuls under Antoninus. Rusticus was a friend and confident to the prince his scholar, who consulted him upon public and private affairs, saluted him with an embrace before the principal officers of his court, made him twice consul, and engaged the senate after his death to erect statues to his honour. I can hardly conceive how a prince so wise, and with so much friendship and esteem for Rusticus, can declare he was often in a passion with him, and congratulate himself on never having, on his account, committed any excess he should have had reason to repent. Perhaps Rusticus, with all his valuable qualities, had a bluntness which tried the emperor's patience.

Young Annius frequented likewise the public schools of rhetoric, where he contracted intimate friendships with his fellow-students which he faithfully preserved; when he came to be emperor, he loaded them with favours; and those who were of too low a rank to be raised to honours, he enriched.

At fifteen years of age he put on the manly gown, and immediately Adrian determined his marriage with the daughter of Verus Cæsar; but the tender age of both delayed the execution of this project, which was afterwards broken off by other circumstances.

Soon after this, Annius was appointed prefect of the city during the Latin holidays; this is a mere titular honour, a shadow of magistracy without any duty, as I have elsewhere observed; however, it was necessary he should take it upon him, and Annius acted his part with all possible decency and dignity.

Vol. II.

About the same time he gave a proof of his disinterested generosity to his only sister Annia Cornificia, by giving her (probably on the occasion of her marriage) all his father's effects. His mother blamed his generosity, and would have opposed it; he answered her representations with telling her, that

that the riches of his paternal grandfather, who had adopted him for his son, and made him his sole heir, were sufficient for him: "and I entreat "of you likewise to give all that you have to my "sister, that so her fortune may not be inferior to "her husband's."

With so many excellent qualities, and conducting himself so admirably well upon every occasion, Annius came to be so loved and esteemed by Adrian, that had he, when Verus died, been of a more advanced age, it is probable, to judge from the manner in which Capitolinus has expressed himself, the emperor would then have chosen him for his successor. However, when he adopted Titus Antoninus, he required of him to adopt M. Annius, together with Verus's son, who, though he was already of the family, being the son of his adoptive son, he preferred to M. Annius, to whom he gave the rights of seniority. After this we shall call him Marcus Aurelius, because, in virtue of his adoption, he took the name of Titus Antoninus's family, which was Aurelius.

His promotion, far from swelling him with pride, or giving him joy, made him uneasy; when he received orders to take possession of the house which Adrian inhabited before he was emperor, he left with regret his mother's gardens where he lodged; and observing his domestics, who thought very differently from him, surprised at his sorrow upon so joyful an occasion, he showed them the troubles, the inconveniences, and the dangers, attending the supreme power.

His change of state produced no change in his manners; he was not only submissive and respectful to his adoptive father and grandfather, but he showed to all his relations the same deference and respect he had done before. No ostentation appeared in his house, in his equipage, or in his person; he distinguished himself in nothing from private persons;

sons; he continued the studies he had begun, and, though destined to empire, he went, as formerly, *; the public lectures of eloquence and philosophy to an economist with discretion, he did not consider foolish expenses as necessarily belonging to his rank, but preserved his fortune to answer real wants, and to be able to assist men of merit by a well-judged liberality.

Immediately after his adoption, though not quite seventeen years old, he was appointed questor, Adrian having obtained from the senate a dispensation of his age.

The steps taken by Adrian for his succession were very proper, and undoubtedly were approved of by every disinterested judge; but ambition is ever in the wrong, and they who had their pretensions and hopes must be concerned at their disappointment, and they could not conceal their discontent. History particularly mentions Catilius Severus, whose name seems to point him out as a relation of Marcus Aurelius; he was a man of consequence, and prefect of the city; his low envy cost him his place.

Adrian, tormented with a long illness, wishes to put himself to death. Antoninus puts it out of his power. Dio. & Adr. 24, 25.

Adrian's illness increased, and left him little hopes of living long; certain remedies which he used, and which Dion, a credulous writer of little judgment, wishes to have considered as secrets of magic, procured short intervals of ease by making him void a great deal of water, which quickly returned and made him swell again. Weary of so miserable a life, and no longer able to support the state of ever dying, but never dead, he wished to end his sufferings by sword or poison; he desired a sword to run himself through, or some poisonous draught, but no-

* We see by this that Marcus Aurelius had not absolutely declared war with eloquence, which was really necessary in the supreme rank, according to the way of thinking of the Romans; but he pursued it only as subordinate to philosophy, and in this particular he was satisfied with avoiding blame, though he should not merit praise.

nobody would give him any. Antoninus had forbid obeying his orders given in despair, showing by this he should believe himself guilty of parricide, did he suffer him, whom he must love as a father, to take away his life; he even used entreaties and prayers with Adrian, and, in company with the principal officers of his court, he exhorted and conjured him to bear his misfortunes with patience, instead of rushing into despair; he succeeded so ill, that Adrian made a second attempt upon his life; he applied to one called Mastor, of the country of the Jazyges, who, having formerly been made a prisoner of war at some battle, appeared to him, by his bodily strength and courage, fit to serve him in hunting; he sent for this Mastor, and, what with caresses, and what with threats, engaged him to kill him; he even marked with his own pencil a place under his breast which his physician Hermogenes had told him was the properest to procure a quick and easy death; but, upon cool reflection, Mastor failed in his promise, and betook himself to flight, to avoid being obliged giving his assistance to so dangerous an action; so Adrian was reduced to lament in vain that he, who was master of the life of others, was not so of his own.

Antoninus's tenderness suggested to him an ingenious expedient, not agreeable indeed to sincerity, but very proper to answer the end he proposed, the composing of Adrian's mind: A woman comes, and desires to speak to the emperor, and tells him, "She "had been warned in a dream to divert him from "killing himself, because he would recover his "health; that, neglecting to obey this heavenly "call, she was become blind; that she had been "warned a second time after the same manner, with "a promise of the recovery of her sight upon obeying the order." After executing this pretended commission, she went to wash her eyes with the water of a sacred fountain, and returned to Adrian with

with her sight and her organs sound and entire: in order to make the impression stronger, the same artifice was repeated by a man who came on purpose from the furthermost part of Pannonia. We are not told whether Adrian was imposed upon by these contrivances; but his health did not return; he even fell into fits of madness; and they say it was upon this occasion he gave his name to the city of Oresta in Thrace, and called it Adrianopolis, (now Adrianople), because he was persuaded, in order to his being cured, it was necessary he should dislodge a madman, and put himself in his place: this, he imagined, he did by substituting his name for that of Orestes.

Lamprid. Heliog. c. 7.

He saved many senators Adrian would have put to death. Spart. Adr. et. Capit. T. Ant. 2. and Aurel. Vict.

Adrian's rage turned upon several members of the senate, whom he condemned to die without any legal cause; but they were saved by Antoninus's goodness, who, though in every thing else, he was submission to his adoptive father, yet did not apprehend it his duty to obey him in violation of the rights of justice and humanity. He made those who were condemned to die keep out of sight, and concealed them till he came to the empire.

Death of Adrian. Dio. et. Spart.

Notwithstanding what he suffered, Adrian continued for a long time his usual labours, and employed himself in the affairs of state. Perceiving, however, how much business suffered from his weak state of health, he often said, * "That a prince "should die without any sickness." No longer able to stand it, he retired to Baiæ, leaving Antoninus at Rome to take care of the republic.

In his retreat he left off all regimen; ate and drank whatever pleased him; and by this means he soon brought on that death he so long had wished for: when he saw it approaching, he sent for Antoninus, and expired in his arms, on the tenth of July, in the year of Rome 889, frequently uttering a kind

* Sanum principem mori debere, non debilem. *Spart. Æl. Ver.* 6.

kind of popular proverb, "The multitude of doc-
"tors have killed the emperor:" a very little time before his death, he would in some manner divert himself with it; and, upon this melancholy subject, composed some jocular verses, whose elegance we might praise, if it was not more just to be solely struck with the deplorable blindness they discover: an illustrious author of our days has happily translated them as follows:

* Poor little pretty fluttering thing,
Must we no longer live together?
And dost thou prune thy trembling wing,
To take thy flight thou know'st not whither?
Thy humorous vein, thy pleasing folly,
Lies all neglected, all forgot:
And pensive, wav'ring, melancholy,
Thou dread'st and hop'st thou knows not what.
Prior.

Adrian was born the twenty-fourth of January, of the year of Rome 807, and consequently lived sixty-two years five months and seventeen days. He reigned twenty years and almost eleven months. Spart. Adr. 11. & 2.

Antoninus ordered his body to be burnt at Puteoli, in a country-house which had belonged to Cicero, and afterwards his ashes were carried to Rome to have the imperial obsequies performed, and to solicit his being ranked among the gods: the senate was by no means disposed to do him that honour; Antoninus obtains of the senate, with much difficulty, that Adrian should be ranked with the gods. Dio. Adr. & Tit. Ant. Spart. Adr 25. 27. & Cap. T. Ant. 5.

* Animula, vagula, blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis,
Quæ nunc abibis in loca,
Pallidula, rigida, nudula?
Nec, ut soles, dabis jocos.
Spart. Adr. 25.

nour; the illustrious blood which Adrian had shed, in the beginning and end of his reign, made his memory odious, and they talked of nothing less than repealing all his acts, as coming from a tyrant. As the soldiers loved Adrian, this measure might have proved as dangerous as it was violent; Antoninus, with tears in his eyes, conjured the senators to come to a better temper, and put a sudden stop to their design of annulling Adrian's acts by telling them, "One of his acts was my adoption; by so "doing you will therefore annul it, and I shall no "longer be your emperor." They still opposed his being ranked among the gods; but Antoninus entirely got the better of them by showing them some of their brother senators alive, whom they imagined had been dead, agreeably to the orders given by Adrian: he did not even assume to himself any honour from this act of goodness; but declared, in so doing, he had only followed Adrian's intentions, who, if he had lived, would have recalled all his rash condemnations. The fact was very improbable, but the senate complied without any further inquiry, and, for the sake of a son so worthy of their esteem, they granted the honours he desired for the memory of the father, whom they hated.

Cap. T. Ant. 6.

The filial duty which Antoninus showed upon this important occasion, is quoted as one of the motives which gained him the surname of Pius; and it was a very good reason.

Adrian was therefore ranked among the gods. His funeral was performed with all that pomp which I have elsewhere described in speaking of Augustus's, and his ashes were laid in the tomb he himself had built, because (it is said) that of Augustus was full. Antoninus, in honour of him, built a temple at Puteoli, where his body had been burnt; he appointed a society of priests, and games to be performed every fifth year; in a word, all the honours which Pagan superstition bestowed upon those

those they considered as gods. Wretched farce! useless to the dead, injurious to the true God!

Adrian deserved neither divine honours, nor perhaps that hatred which the senate showed to his memory: he had an exalted genius, great knowledge in the government of the republic, with a constant application to business; he understood how to make himself both respected and beloved by the army, where he observed a steady and strict discipline, but without severity. The death of four consular persons in the beginning of his reign, and the cruelties he exercised or ordered at the end of his life, have greatly sullied his glory; but it is more than probable these four consulars had conspired against him: and his last severities, though undoubtedly inexcusable, ought in part to be charged to the cruel disorder he laboured under: in general the state was happy under his reign; there had been no seditions, with few wars, and these but of little consequence to the public tranquillity. Adrian's government would have been praised had he succeeded to Domitian; it was his misfortune to have for predecessors Nerva and Trajan, and for successors Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius. A judgment of Adrian.

Being a prince of great learning, he cultivated and protected all the arts; but, in his time, all good taste was lost: they were not only unacquainted with that beautiful natural simplicity which is the characteristic of the excellent writers in the Augustan age, but they did not even preserve a second degree of beauties, which, in later times, came to be substituted in room of the first; I mean richness and variety of thought, with a bold masculine style. The state of literature under his reign.

We can only quote, under Adrian, two Latin writers, Suetonius and Florus, one of whom is dry, often trifling, without dignity, writing meanly and below his subject; the other has a nobleness of style, but degenerates into fustian. In an abridgment

which ought to be quite simple and plain, Florus speaks in the language of a declaimer, as if he proposed, by his pompous manner, to make up for the poorness of a subject reduced to a skeleton. It was he who first introduced abridgments, so convenient for the lazy, and proper for making half-scholars.

The Greeks, in Adrian's time, enriched literature more than the Romans; but, excepting Plutarch, an author of superior merit, and perhaps Arrian, whose style is compared to that of Xenophon, the rest do not rise above mediocrity: some applied themselves to discuss subtle and knotty questions, or produced collections of detached pieces; those who affected the orator, were, for the most part, no better than sophists, who, mixing eloquence and philosophy without the least judgment, showed themselves neither orators nor philosophers. The study of philosophy was then the reigning fashion, and it produced some works useful to morals; but, I will venture to say, it was one of the causes of the corruption of eloquence. Philosophy, when pursued with moderation, may tend to the improvement of the other arts; but she must not rule, and bring every thing under her subjection, nor take from them their proper form to dress them in her own.

I will say nothing here of Plutarch, who is sufficiently known; Rollin may be consulted.

Arrian was a philosopher, and employed in the great affairs of state: being an assiduous and respectful disciple of Epictetus, he has collected, in eight books, four of which still remain, the principal maxims of his master, fuller than we find them in Epictetus's own manual. Though born at Nicomedia in Bithynia, and probably of Grecian extraction, he notwithstanding came to the consulship at Rome, which became more and more the common country to all the different nations of the empire. There is but little reason to doubt but he was the same Flavius Arrianus, governor of Cappadocia, who,

who, as I have already related, upon the authority of Dion, repulsed or stopped the incursions of the Alans. We have, among Arrian's works, a description of the order of battle of the Roman army when drawn up against those people: he composed a great number of works, most of which are lost; the most celebrated of those which remain is his history of Alexander, penned from the memoirs of Ptolemy and Aristobulus. I have had occasion to quote his periple* of the Euxine sea, which is addressed in the form of a letter to the emperor Adrian: we have likewise a periple of the Red sea, which goes under his name; but men of learning believe it the work of a more ancient author. Without being wanting in that respect which is due to Salmasius, who is followed by Vossius and Tillemont, I have produced, in the reign of Trajan, a part of that periple; and it appears to me extremely natural to think that Adrian, who was fond of voyages, and not being able himself to make the tour of the Euxine and Red seas, was desirous that the coasts of both, then but little known, should be visited by an able and correct observer.

The Arrian I speak of must be distinguished from him to whom Pliny the younger wrote several of his letters, and who was retired into the country, and consequently advanced in years, when Pliny was in the full career of his honours.

I have mentioned Phlegon, a freedman of Adrian, who lent him his name to a work where that emperor had written his own life: he was an author of invention, and a great number of books are quoted which he wrote, and abound with learned researches. We are indebted to him, particularly, for the testimony he gives to the miraculous eclipse which

* Periple is a Greek word, which signifies a circuit made by sea; so the periple of the Euxine sea is a description of a navigation round the Euxine, coasting along.

happened at our Saviour's passion; these are his words, as they are related by Eusebius: "In the "fourth year of the two hundredth and second "Olympiad, there happened an eclipse of the sun, "the most remarkable that ever had been; at noon "the day was changed into so dark a night, that "the stars were seen in the heavens." The year mentioned by Phlegon is, by the learned, considered as that in which Jesus Christ was crucified.

Euseb. Chron.

That we may omit nothing which can reasonably be wished for in regard to the men of learning in Adrian's time, I will add, that Epictetus was still alive under this prince, and appeared at his court; that the philosopher Euphrates, whom I have mentioned upon account of his quarrels with Apollonius Tyaneus, obtained of Adrian, in the first year of his reign, liberty to put himself to death, because he could not bear with his sickness under the infirmities of old age.

We know but little of Suetonius's life, who was of mean birth, and, as I mentioned before, ruined his fortune by indiscretion; he informs us himself that his father, named Suetonius Lenis, served as a military tribune in Otho's army against Vitellius; in his youth he pleaded at the bar, as appears from a letter of Pliny, who, in this and some others, expresses a very particular affection for him; besides his lives of the twelve Cæsars, he has written sundry other works, all in the taste of curious researches, and of which there remains a book of illustrious grammarians, and another of famous rhetoricians; we have likewise some lives of Latin poets, which are ascribed to him.

Tillemont.

ANNALS OF TITUS ANTONINUS.

..... CAMERINUS. A. . 88[illegible].
..... NIGER. A. C. 138

Titus Antoninus succeeds Adrian the tenth of July, and receives the surname of *Pius* from the senate. Faustina, his wife, is called Augusta.

Conspiracy against the new emperor. He shows clemency to the guilty.

T. ANTONINUS AUGUSTUS II. A. R. 890.
C. BRUTTIUS PRÆSENS II. A. C. 139.

Marcus Aurelius questor.

His marriage with Faustina, the daughter of Antoninus, is concluded. In consequence of this, he receives the title of Cæsar, and is appointed consul for the following year.

T. ANTONINUS AUGUSTUS III. A. R. 891.
M. AURELIUS CÆSAR. A. C. 140.

M. PEDUCÆUS SYLOGA PRISCINUS. . R. 892.
T. HOENIUS SEVERUS. A. C. 141.

Death of the empress Faustina.

Last astronomical observation of Ptolemy, on Wednesday the second of February.

A. R. 893. L. Cuspius Rufinus.
A. C. 142. L. Statius Quadratus.

This year were established the games which Antoninus consecrated to Adrian's memory, and which were to be celebrated every fifth year at Puteoli.

A. R. 894. C. Bellicius Torquatus.
A. C. 143. Ti. Claudius Herodes Atticus.

Herodes Atticus, consul this year, was the famous sophist who gave lessons of Greek eloquence to Marcus Aurelius.

A. R. 895. ..... Avitus.
A. C. 144. ..... Maximus.

These two consuls were, probably, Lollianus Avitus and Claudius Maximus, who were proconsuls of Africa, one after the other.

A. R. 896. T. Antoninus Augustus IV.
A. C. 145. M. Aurelius Cæsar II.

L. Commodus, second adoptive son of Antoninus, puts on the manly robe.

Dedication of the temple built in honour of Adrian.

A. R. 897. Sex. Erucius Clarus II.
A. C. 146. Cn. Claudius Severus.

Erucius Clarus was prefect of the city. He is praised by Aulus Gellius, as curious in the knowledge of antiquity, and a lover of the ancient manners.

..... Largus. A. R. 898. A. C. 147.
..... Messalinus.

Secular games.

Marcus Aurelius, father of a daughter who appears to be Lucilla, afterwards married to L. Verus, receives the tribunitian and proconsular power.

Appian Alexandrinus writes about that time.

..... Torquatus. A. R. 899. A. C. 148.
..... Julianus.

Ser. Scipio Orfitus. A. R. 900. A. C. 149.
Q. Nonius Priscus.

..... Glabrio Gallicanus. A. R. 901. A. C. 150.
..... Vetus.

..... Quintilius Condianus. A. R. 902. A. C. 151.
..... Quintilius Maximus.

These two consuls were brothers, and are celebrated in history for their merit and harmony.

Sex. Junius Glabrio. A. R. 903. A. C. 152.
C. Omulus Verianus.

This same year was consul, but deputed and extraordinary, M. Valerius Homulus, or Omulus, whose rusticity and sharp raillery Antoninus often bore with.

A rescript from Antoninus to the province of Asia in favour of the Christians.

C. Bruttius Præsens. A. R. 904. A. C. 153.
A. Junius Rufinus.

L. Commodus, questor, gives plays, and presides at them, seated between Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius. He was consul the following year.

A. R. 905. A. C. 154. L. AURELIUS COMMODUS. T. SEXTIUS LITERANUS.

A. R. 906. A. C. 155. C. JULIUS SEVERUS. M. RUFINUS SABINIANUS.

A. R. 907. A. C. 156. M. CEIONIUS SILVANUS. C. SERIUS AUGURINUS.

A. R. 908. A. C. 157. ..... BARBARUS. ..... REGULUS.

A. R. 909. A. C. 158. ..... TERTULLUS. ..... SACERDOS.

A. R. 910. A. C. 159. ..... PLAUTIUS QUINTILLUS. M. STATIUS PRISCUS.

A. R. 911. A. C. 160. APPIUS ANNIUS BRADUA. T. VIBIUS BARUS.

A. R. 912. A. C. 161. M. AURELIUS CÆSAR III. L. AURELIUS COMMODUS II.

Antoninus's death, the 7th of March. They appoint him divine honours.

TITUS

TITUS ANTONINUS.

SECT. IV.

Antoninus's reign, in all respects, worthy of being remembered; wants historians. Honours decreed to Antoninus, and to all who belong to him. He begins with acts of clemency to the conspirators. Beginnings of rebellion and of war appeased without trouble. The indifference of the Roman emperors for conquest. The reign of Antoninus was pacific. He studies to make his people happy. He takes advice, but does not suffer himself to be governed. He is fond of giving a reason for his conduct. His affable and popular manners. Acts of kindness, which even injuries do not prevent. When he must use severity, he always softened it with mildness. His compassion, a great assistance in public calamities. He fears to oppress the people. Antoninus's goodness does not degenerate into weakness. He manages the finances of the state, and is liberal of his own fortune. An economist without avarice, he understands where to bestow his liberalities. Games and spectacles. Edifices with which he embellishes Rome and many other cities. Equality and steadiness of his conduct. Antoninus's ordinances upon several points of jurisprudence. Rescripts in favour of Christians. He is respected by all the neighbouring kings and nations to the empire. His private conduct was as praise-worthy as his maxims of government. Some imperfection, however, to be observed. Antoninus makes Marcus Aurelius his son-in-law, and gives him the name of Cæsar. Marcus Aurelius continues his exercises and studies in philosophy.

losophy. The saucy pedantry of Apollonius the Stoic. The good heart of Marcus Aurelius. He is associated into the tribunitial power. Secular games. He governs with Antoninus. Honours paid to his memory. Veneration for the name of Antoninus. A picture of Antoninus drawn by Marcus Aurelius. Antoninus loves and cultivates letters. Men famous for their genius and their works in his reign. Fronto, an orator. Appian. Ptolemy. Maxims of Tyre. Herodus Atticus.

The reign of Antoninus altogether deserving of remembrance; wants historians.

THE coming of Titus Antoninus to the sovereign power was matter of joy to the senate, the people, and all the empire. This prince, during a reign of more than twenty-two years, maintained and increased the esteem which the public had for him from the beginning. It is undoubtedly a great misfortune that an emperor so deserving of praise should want historians, whilst such as Tiberius and Nero have their Tacitus. We often repeat the same complaints, but they can never find a more proper place than here.

The want of memoirs not suffering us to write a continued and circumstantial history of his reign, we shall content ourselves to draw a picture of his character and government. The facts which will remain shall be afterwards treated in their order as much as possible.

Honours decreed to Antoninus, and all who belong to him. Capit. Ant. 5, 6.

Antoninus, from the time of his adoption, had been invested with the tribunitial and proconsular power. Upon Adrian's death, they gave him the titles of Augustus, of High-priest, and they offered him that of Father of his Country. He refused the last, imitating in this the modesty of most of his predecessors, who would merit that honourable appellation before they received it. Antoninus did not put it off long; we find him styled the Father of his Country the second year of his reign; undoubtedly he deserved it; and Pausanias, who wrote

Tillem. art. 5, 6. Pausan. Art.

soon

soon after his death, testifies that, after the example of Cyrus, he desired to be called the Father of Men.

The senate likewise gave him the title of *Pius*, which I have elsewhere explained, and which it is difficult to render into our language by one word. Antoninus accepted it, and immediately showed how well he deserved it by the joy he expressed at the zeal of the senate in honouring his father, mother, grandfather, and brothers, who had died before him; to all of whom statues were ordered to be erected. I have already said that Antoninus showed his filial piety towards Adrian by all kinds of honours, licit and illicit; and here I add, that he consecrated to him a magnificent bust, which probably was placed where the senate assembled. His wife Faustina was at the same time called Augusta, and perhaps he was ashamed to prevent it. Capit.

As to what concerned himself, he suffered the institution of games in the circus for the celebration of his birth-day; but, in every thing else, he refused all the vain honours they would have loaded him with, and, in particular, the change of the names of the months September and October, which they proposed calling for the future by Antoninus and Faustina. He, with great reason, despised all marks of respect, which the flattery of former times had rendered equivocal, and which had been often lavished upon bad princes. Capit. 10.

In the beginning of his reign, he had an opportunity of showing his clemency to a sort of criminals princes are seldom inclined to pardon; ambitious senators formed one or more conspiracies against him of which we know but little; history names Celsus, Attilius, and Priscianus, who, separately or jointly, conspired against Antoninus; he could not save Attilius from the vengeance of the senate, who proscribed him; Priscianus killed himself; we know nothing of what became of Celsus, unless he met the

He begins with acts of clemency towards the conspirators. Appian. Pref. Dio.

the same fate with one of the former; but Antoninus put a stop to all inquiries after the accomplices of the conspirators. "I would not," says he, "begin my government with acts of severity;" and he added, with good humour, "It would nei-
Vict. Epit. "ther do me honour, nor give me pleasure, to find, "upon information, that I was hated by a num-"ber of my fellow-citizens." Attilius's son not only did not suffer for the crime of his father, but he always found a protector in Antoninus. This gentle method succeeded; we hear no more of any conspiracies formed against a prince who revenged himself after so noble a way.

Beginnings of rebellion and of war easily appeased. Capit. 3, 7, and 13. Fast. Arc. Antoninus likewise experienced some rebellions, either from the Jews, or from Achaia and Egypt; he had the Moors, the Daci, and some nations in Germany, to bring back to their duty; and he had the Alans to repress, who, at different times, endeavoured to disturb the peace of the empire on the side of Upper Asia. He was under a necessity to stop the incursions of the Brigantes in Great Britain, who had revolted, and infested the countries which remained in their subjection; but none of these warlike commotions was attended with any material consequences; some were no more than seditions, which he appeased without blood, merely by a steady and equal conduct; he put an end to wars without going from Rome, or at least out of Italy, by employing his lieutenants, who, without trouble or hazard, every where obtained that success which the emperor desired, who had no passion for conquests. It was Lollius Urbicus who, under his auspices, conquered the Brigantes. This general extended a little the frontiers of the empire in Britain, and built a new wall beyond that of Adrian, which, it is thought, extended obliquely from the river Esk to the mouth of the Tweed.

Cellar. Geograph. Ant. l. II. c. 4.

Appian. Præf.

The Romans did not concern themselves much about adding the remaining part of the island to

their

their dominion, as they found but very little advantage from what they possessed.

In general, the passion for aggrandising the empire operated but faintly during the times I write of; and all the emperors of whom I have spoken, except Trajan, followed Augustus's maxim in that point. They were masters of the most beautiful parts of the universe, and there was no extending their empire without meeting with barbarous and poor nations, where conquest must be rather a burden than an advantage. Appian, who wrote under Antoninus, says, he saw at Rome ambassadors from these people, desiring to be admitted into the number of Roman subjects, whose requests were refused. The emperors very justly were of opinion, that the true and substantial way of increasing their grandeur was by the cultivation of land, and improvement of commerce, through the vast and rich countries they possessed.

The indifference of the Roman emperors for conquest.

The slight expeditions which Antoninus had to direct by his orders, so little affected the peace of the empire, as not to prevent his reign from being considered as altogether pacific. This prince, both from taste and reflection, was fond of peace; and he often repeated, with great-good humour, a saying of Scipio, which he has saved from oblivion, "I "had rather," says he, "preserve one citizen than "kill a thousand enemies." He had the satisfaction to enjoy that peace he so much desired; and, not being distracted with the cares of war, nothing prevented his giving himself up entirely to the thought how to make the people under him happy.

Antoninus's reign was pacific.

To this he gave his whole attention, governing the * state with all the diligent concern of a good father of a family in his domestic affairs. Averse to giving vexation, he obliged the intendants to raise

He applies himself to make his people happy.

* Tantâ diligentiâ subjectos sibi populos rexit, ut omnia ei omnes, quasi sua essent, curaret.

raise the taxes with moderation. He heard the complaints brought against them; he punished severely all who were guilty of injustice; and he had no pleasure in any gain which tended to oppress the people *: besides all this, it was very difficult to deceive him, because he took information of every thing himself; people went directly to him, without any intermediate persons: he was at the doing of every thing, whether it belonged to the state in general, or to some of the provinces; and his courtiers had it not in their power to sell the favour of a prince so diligent and quick-sighted.

He takes advice, but nevertheless governs.

We are not from hence to conclude he took no advice: never did he decide any affair of consequence without consulting with his friends; but he did not suffer himself to be led blindfold; he only borrowed light from others to see more clearly himself.

He liked to give a reason for his conduct. Capit. 12.

Observing so upright and exalted a conduct, he had no interest in concealing his motives of action; and, upon every occasion, he gave the true reason for what he did, either by a speech in the senate, or by declarations posted up in the public places.

His manners affable and popular. Capit. 6, 7, 11.

Secure of his dignity, he was under no apprehensions of lessening it by his popular manner; and history has observed, that, whilst he seemed to lower, he in reality raised himself; and, by showing to the Romans an emperor, who behaved himself as a private citizen, he lost no part of that veneration and respect which was due to his rank, but gained love and affection. The sovereign power produced no alteration in him; such as he had wished, when a private person, princes should be to him, such he showed himself to the senators after his promotion. If he desired any office for himself or his friends, he did not dispense with any of the previous steps which law or custom prescribed for candidates,

* Nec unquam lætatus est lucro quo provincialis oppressus est.

candidates, and their relations. He went, as Adrian had done, to the public baths, which he had prepared and warmed at his own expense; and, when he came out of them, he left them free to the people. With his friends he lived in the same familiarity as before his high rank: he invited them to entertainments, went to eat with them, and sent for them to his vintage. This modest kind of goodness was one of the virtues of the times; Trajan had taken it up on this footing; Adrian kept to it, and Antoninus with pleasure followed a plan so agreeable to his own inclination.

His goodness was unalterable, and even superior to injuries: in the time of a famine, the populace, who, when they wanted bread, entirely forgot themselves, threw stones at him. Antoninus, instead of revenging this insult of his authority, chose rather to appease the seditious, by informing them of the measures he had taken to redress the public misfortune; and, at the same time, he applied a very effectual remedy, purchasing, at his own expense, corn, wine, and oil, which he distributed freely among the poor citizens.

Acts of goodness not prevented by injuries. Vict. Epit.

Capit. 8.

One day he visited the house of a rich senator, named Omulus, who was consul in his reign, and there having observed with admiration some pillars of porphyry, he asked of him whence he had that magnificient ornament? Omulus bluntly replied, "You forget, you ought to be deaf and dumb "when you are in another's house." Antoninus, with great patience, bore this impertinence of an ill-bred senator; and, upon many other occasions, he overlooked, with the same good humour, his ill-natured raillery.

Capit. 2.

I will produce, from the authority of Philostratus, one proof more of Antoninus's patience in regard to a sophist: When he was proconsul of Asia, he lodged at Smyrna, in the house of Polemon a sophist, who was then abroad: it was the best house

Philost. Soph. l. 2.

in the town. Polemon was master of great riches, which he employed in pride and ostentation; his arrogance was of a piece, and, upon his return home, he was very angry to find his house occupied by the proconsul; he made a great noise, put himself in a passion, and, with his bitter complaints, obliged him in the middle of the night to go and find himself another lodging. Adrian, if we give credit to Philostratus, interested himself for Polemon, not only to protect him during his own life, but after it; from a dread of Antoninus's resentment against this sophist, he designedly inserted an article into his last will, where, speaking of his choice of a son and successor, he affirms Polemon had advised him to take Antoninus. This precaution was unnecessary in regard to this prince, who loaded Polemon with favours, and never showed his remembering any injury he received but in joke and pleasantry. Polemon being come to Rome, the emperor embraced him, and ordered a lodging should be found for him, and that nobody should turn him out of it. An actor of tragedy, having brought a complaint to Antoninus against Polemon, who had driven him from the theatre, "what o'clock "was it when he drove you away?" says the emperor: Mid-day, answers the actor. Very well, replied Antoninus, he turned me out of his house at midnight, and I took it patiently.

When he must use severity, he always mixed it with gentleness.

This merciful prince never made use of severity, but in cases of absolute necessity, and even then he found out some expedient for tempering it, which should not hurt by its example. Informers, a race of men essentially bad, were entirely destroyed under his reign, so all liberty of injurious accusations was banished, and never had condemnations and forfeitures been more rare. He was so scrupulous in shedding the blood of senators, that one of them being convicted of parricide, and obliged to confess his crime, as it was impossible to save the life of such a monster, the emperor, to prevent his being shocked

shocked with the punishment, had the criminal transported into a barren island, that he might perish of hunger and misery.

This mixture of severity and good-nature abundantly appears in Antoninus's behaviour in regard to extortioners. He gave their estates, when confiscated, to their children, but with this condition, that they should repair the wrongs done to the subjects of the empire.

His compassion of great use in public calamities. Cap. 9. & Pausan. Arc.

Public calamities of different kinds happened in his reign, which furnished him with opportunities of exerting his compassion. I have mentioned a famine, and shall add the inundation of the Tyber; a considerable fire which consumed three hundred and forty houses at Rome, with other fires at Narbon, Antioch, and Carthagena; an earthquake in Asia, which did great damage to several cities, and in particular, at Cyzicum, destroyed one of the most beautiful temples in the universe. Antoninus, to all these misfortunes, applied the different kinds of remedies in his power, and he plainly showed nothing was so dear to him as giving ease to his people.

Dio.

He fears to oppress the people.

He was so afraid lest he should oppress them, that it was partly owing to this he never went from Rome or its neighbourhood. His first reason for it was, that when he was in the centre of the empire, where every thing that passed in the provinces was talked of, he was more in readiness to receive intelligence, and to provide for whatever might be wanting. But he himself assigned as a second motive, that the travels of an emperor, how great soever an economist, must be burdensome to the countries he passed through *.

Antoninus's goodness did not degenerate into weakness. Capit. T. Ant. 14. & M. Ant. 6. & Ver. 2. & 3.

Antoninus's great goodness did not degenerate into weakness. This prince, who was gentle to citizens, treated freedmen with great severity, and gave them

* Gravem esse provincialibus comitatum principis, etiam nimis parci.

no encouragement. There was a great difference, in point of merit, between his two adoptive sons, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Commodus. He was sensible of this, and behaved to them accordingly. The first he conferred honours upon, confided in him, and appointed him his successor. To Commodus he granted nothing he could refuse. He made him questor, and twice consul, but he did not admit him into the senate before his questorship. When he went to his country-house, he did not take him into the same vehicle with himself, but made him go with the pretorian prefect. He did not give him the appellation of Cæsar, nor did he call him to his succession. In a word, during almost twenty-three years which Antoninus reigned, Commodus lived in the palace as a private person, with no other distinction than the title of the emperor's son.

He manages the public revenue, but is liberal of his own fortune.

One character of a good prince is this, to manage the public revenue. Vespasian and Trajan, among the Romans, Henry the fourth with us, are shining instances of this maxim. Antoninus carried this salutary economy to a great degree of perfection. He came to the throne with a large private fortune, and he spent it to save the public treasury. When he was adopted, Adrian, according to custom, had promised largesses to the people; Antoninus gave them at his own expense, and when Faustina upbraided him with it*, "You have no "sublimity of thought (say he;) do not you know, "the moment we came to the empire, we lost our "property in whatever we possessed before†." He gave his patrimony to the republic, reserving only the income to himself and his daughter Faustina, whom

* Stulta, posteaquam ad imperium transivimus, etiam quod habuimus ante perdidimus.

† The text imports, that Antoninus gave the income of his fortune to the republic, and the property to his daughter. But Casaubon has observed that the contrary is more probable, and Mr Tillemont has followed him.

whom he married to Marcus Aurelius. When he made any stay in the country, it was upon his estates, as in the time of his private condition. The valuable furniture and jewels of the crown appeared to him as so much dead money; and the pleasure-houses belonging to the imperial dignity he considered only as subjects of great expense, and therefore he sold a great part of them to enrich his treasury. So, when he came to die, he left it extremely rich, whereas his own fortune was greatly diminished by his acts of generosity. Dio.

He had no patience with pensions granted upon the treasury without good reason, and he cut off a great many, saying, "It was the most scandalous "and cruel thing in the world, that the repub- "lic should be eaten up (that was his expression) "by those who did it no service." A lyric poet, called Mesomedus, was among those whom Antoninus found too well paid, and his pension was lessened.

This wise prince in every thing observed the proper bounds. His desire to enrich the treasury did not lead him to injustice, nor prevent his doing the proper acts of liberality. He would not accept of successions bequeathed to him by will, where there were children. He gave pensions, and distinctions of honour, to the masters of eloquence and philosophy, through all the provinces of the empire. He exempted Italy altogether from a tax paid by the people to emperors upon their accession, and the provinces he eased of a half of it. He paid to the troops the usual distributions of money; he established funds for the education of a certain number of young girls, whom he called Faustinians, in honour of the empress his wife. He made a present of considerable sums to several cities, either for building new works, or to repair old ones which had fallen to ruin, or through accident were entirely demolished. He granted

An economist without avarice, he knew where to do his liberalities. Capit. 4, 8, 9.

pensions to poor senators, and assisted the magistrates in supporting the expenses of their office. Thus he showed himself an economist without avarice, and liberal without prodigality.

Games and spectacles. Capit. 10, 11, 12.

Games, which amuse the people, did not appear to him a superfluous expense; he gave combats of beasts, in one of which a hundred lions were killed at once. He was at the pains to bring to Rome, from all the different parts of the universe, the most remarkable kinds of animals to feast the eyes of the multitude, such as crocodiles, sea-horses, elephants, tigers. I say nothing of the pantomime spectacles which he was fond of, and with which he amused himself. He did not, however, approve of that profusion frequently made for games, and he fixed at a certain sum the expense that should be laid out upon the combats of gladiators.

Edifices with which he embellishes Rome and other cities. M. Aurel. L. 1. Capit. 8.

Though he had no passion for building, yet he embellished Rome with several edifices, of which perhaps the most remarkable is a temple in honour of Adrian. He finished likewise what remained to be done of his predecessor's tomb, and in many cities of Italy he built useful works. Nîmes, the country of his ancestors, attributes to him, and that too with great probability, the two most superb monuments of the Roman magnificence remaining with us, the Arènes and the Pont du Gard. He likewise aggrandized and honoured with privileges the town of Pallantium in Arcadia, which, upon account of Evander, was considered as the cradle of Rome. He turned it into a city, and gave them a right to govern themselves by their own laws, with an exemption from all taxes.

Pausan. Arc

Equality and steadiness of his conduct. M. Aurel. L. 1. Dio. Capit. 8.

The consummate prudence of Antoninus on all occasions produced in him a perfect uniformity, the great characteristic of a superior and exalted virtue. He was always the same; no humour, no caprice, was to be seen. His friends had nothing to fear from those sudden storms which rendered

Adrian's

Adrian's court so very tempestuous. He chose with great attention those he put in office, and when they were once appointed, they were sure of affability from their prince, and of remaining in their employ as long as it suited them: vice only brought disgrace, which was not accompanied with a rigorous severity even to the worthless. Excepting these, every one continued in his place; upon his coming to the empire, he removed none of those whom Adrian had vested with authority, and Gavius Maximus was, during twenty years, his pretorian prefect.

We know in general that, with the assistance of the ablest lawyers of his time, he made several ordinances to regulate and improve the administration of justice in different points; but we are not let into all the particulars, and I shall only mention three of those regulations. Besides, it is uncertain whether the last of the three was made by Antoninus or his successor Marcus Aurelius, who, with ancient authors, had likewise the name of Antoninus.

Antoninus's ordinances upon different points of jurisprudence. Capit. 12. and ib. Casaub.

I will begin with observing, that this emperor prohibited the prosecution of a person a second time for the same crime from which he had been acquitted;—a wise law, which prevents trouble being endless, and secures a tranquillity dearly purchased with the risk of a criminal prosecution.

The second rule I shall mention, is the moderating the rigour of the Roman law in a case of profit to the treasury. If a father became a Roman citizen, and his children, upon some account or other, did not change their condition, but remained citizens of their own country as before, he could not have them for his heirs, but the inheritance was to go to other families, or devolve to the emperor. Thus a human law partly abolished the law of nature. Antoninus, without regarding the profit which from thence redounded to his treasury, put things in their natural order, and would not have an honour sought for and obtained by the father to prejudice the children.

Pausan. Arc.

Aug. de adult. conjug. ii. 8.

A third regulation, which is preserved to us by St Austin, respects the causes of adultery. It established for a rule, that if a husband prosecuted his wife at law for infidelity, the judge should inquire whether the husband himself had been faithful to his wife, and if both were found guilty, both were to be punished. "* For," says the emperor, "it "appears to me altogether unjust for the husband "to require of the wife the observance of an en- "gagement he has broken himself." This law, which deserves all the commendations St Austin bestows upon it, would be alarming perhaps to libertines. But though it must be owned the inconveniencies arising to civil society from the adultery of the wife are much greater, it notwithstanding is true, the crime in itself is equal on both sides, and equally condemned by sound morality.

Rescripts in favour of Christians. Tillem. hist. eccl. S. Justin.

Antoninus was favourable even to the Christians exposed at that time to the public hatred. Far from that false zeal which superstition inspires, he not only published no order for their persecution, but sheltered them from the blind fury of the populace, and the injustice of the Roman magistrates; for envy at their virtue, and the calumnies with which they were blackened, continually raised storms which put them in constant danger, and brought many of them to martyrdom. It was this engaged S. Justin to present to the emperor a noble and excellent apology for the Christians, and it appears Antoninus was touched with it. So far is certain, that he sent orders to several cities of Greece to quell the seditious commotions against the innocent; and in Eusebius we read that which was addressed upon the same account to the people in general

Euseb. hist. eccl. 4, 26, and 13.

* Perinquum enim mihi videtur esse, ut pudicitiam vir ab uxore exigat, quam ipse non exhibet.

neral of Asia Minor. He boldly takes upon him the defence of the Christians; he commends their fidelity to their God, their courage in contempt of death, and he even turns his praises of their virtues into reproaches against the vices of their persecutors. He concluded his decree by declaring, that the name of Christian is not a crime, and if any are brought before the courts upon no other charge, he ought to be acquitted, and his prosecutor punished. Nothing, it seems, remained for this prince to do but one step more—fully to know, and heartily to embrace, the truth. But the divine judgments are impenetrable, and it is our part humbly to adore them.

He is respected of the kings and people near the empire. Dio. Capit. 9. and Vict. Epit.

It is easy to imagine, a prince, who governed in the manner I have described, was tenderly beloved by his subjects. Antoninus, moreover, saw himself respected by foreigners, though he had not made one offensive war. The reputation of justice gave him, over all the neighbouring kings and nations of the empire, an authority which arms could not have procured him. Pharasmanes, king of Iberia, came to Rome to compliment him, and showed him still greater deference than he had paid to Adrian. Pacorus was established by him king of the Lazi, a people of Colchis. The Parthian king was making preparation for war with the Armenians; Antoninus prevented him only by a letter, and this, too, though he had no blind complaisance for him who had refused to restore the golden throne which Trajan had taken from Chosroës. The Indians, the Bactrians, the Hyrcanians, sent embassies to him. The barbarous nations upon the frontiers, instead of doing themselves justice by arms, chose him for the arbiter of their claims and differences. He is justly compared to Numa, and in no particular is the resemblance greater than in this, that the prudence of both was the happy occasion that a love of peace and virtuous sentiments prevailed among their neighbours,

neighbours, and produced quiet and tranquillity all around them *.

His private behaviour as commendable as his maxims of government. Capit. 7. 2. M. Aurel. L. 1. Vict. Epit.

Antoninus's private behaviour, of which I have related several particulars, was of a piece with his prudence in the government of the state. He kept a good table, but not a luxurious one. He employed to serve him no other officers or purveyors but those he had when a private person. He admitted his friends to eat with him, but put them under no disagreeable returns, not taking it amiss if they excused themselves from coming when invited. When he found it necessary to take something in the morning to support him in his business before dinner, he ate a bit of dry bread. His amusements, excepting the pantomimes, which are condemned by the purity of Christian morals, and even by philosophy, were all innocent, such as fishing, hunting, walking, and conversation with his friends.

Some faults to be observed. Capit. 8. M. Aurel.

His manners were not entirely blameless. Capitolinus mentions a concubine kept by this prince †; and, according to Marcus Aurelius's testimony, he suddenly gave over a still more criminal practice, then very prevalent at Rome, which supposes him guilty before. This is all that history reproaches him with, unless we should reckon his excessive indulgence to his wife, whose behaviour did no honour to the throne, as a just ground of censure. Whilst she was alive, he bore with great patience all her liberties; he agreed to her being honoured with the title of Augusta when he came to the empire; and when this princess died, at the end of three years, he

Capit. 3, 5, 6.

* Οἷον ἐκ πηγῆς τῆς Νομᾶ σοφίας, τῶν καλῶν καὶ δικαίων ἐπιτρεόντων εἰς ἅπαντας, καὶ διαχρεομένης τῆς πολιτικῆς γαλήνης. Plut. Num.

† I know that the Roman law formerly allowed the keeping of concubines who, without marriage, lived with single men; and children begot in this state, though they were not lawful heirs to their father, were not [illegible]. If Antoninus kept within these bounds, he was [illegible] the laws of the country.

he ordered divine honours should be paid her, with all the apparatus of a temple, priestesses, and statues of gold and silver This was carrying very far either a weak and blind attachment, or an affectation of ignorance of what all the world knew.

His scrupulous exactness was blamed by some, and wits, to whom perhaps it was troublesome, said of him that he split a hair*. But it is easy for those, to whom all things are indifferent but their own pleasure and interest, to cast a ridicule upon that care and attention which virtue inspires. Antoninus had a great soul, with an exalted genius; and such a character is not compatible with trifles. Dio.

There remain but few things to relate of this prince till his death, and they for the most part regard Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, his adoptive sons.

Antoninus makes Marcus Aurelius his son-in-law, and names him Cæsar. Cap. M. Ant. 6. and Ver. 2.

Immediately upon Adrian's death, Antoninus gave substantial proofs of his singular esteem for Marcus Aurelius, and how much he preferred him to his brother. Adrian had settled the marriages of these young princes. Marcus Aurelius was to have the daughter of Verus Cæsar, and Commodus the daughter of Antoninus. The new emperor determined to alter these projects, and, availing himself of the excuse Commodus's want of years furnished him with, he caused Marcus Aurelius to be sounded as to his intention of making him his son-in-law. Aurelius, perhaps from a regard to Adrian's appointment, desired time to consider of so advantageous an offer. Upon reflection, he agreed to the proposal, and so secured still more his succession to the empire, but got a wife who greatly injured his reputation. We cannot tell whether the marriage was immediately celebrated or postponed for some years, nor do we know exactly the age of Faustina, Antoninus's daughter. We see that, eight years after, Marcus

* Κωμωνοπρίστην ἐκάλειν.

Marcus Aurelius had a daughter by her, who probably was Lucilla, married afterwards to Commodus; and thus became wife to him who, by the first plan, should have married her mother.

But at what time soever the marriage between Marcus Aurelius and Faustina was celebrated, immediately upon its being determined, that is to say, the year after Adrian's death, Antoninus crowned him with all sorts of honours; he gave him the name of Cæsar, appointed him consul with himself the year following, made him chief of one of the centuries of the Roman knights, and when that young prince, in virtue of this character, exhibited spectacles to the people with his colleagues, the emperor placed himself at his side. Antoninus appointed him a household, notwithstanding the aversion which he showed to all pomp and magnificence; the palace on the Tyber was given him to lodge in, and he adorned it four years after his second consulate, in which he would have him again for his colleague.

Marcus Aurelius continues his exercises and study of philosophy.

At the same time that he hurt Marcus Aurelius's great modesty with all this show and state, he did not neglect to encourage his favourite passion for philosophy; for neither fortune nor dignity had made the least alteration in this young Cæsar's taste for polite learning, which improves the human heart by impressing it with a sense of all the beauties of virtue. Loaded with honours, and destined to empire, he continued his application to this truly exalted science, and he diligently attended the instructions of the ablest masters. Antoninus, to please him in this, sent for a celebrated Stoic, named Apollonius, from Chalcis in Syria.

Capit. T. Ant. 10.

M. Aurel. l. 1.

Marcus Aurelius owns he had great obligations to this philosopher; he says he learned from him all that Stoicism undertakes; steadiness under the misfortunes of life, elevation of sentiment, and even a mixture of mildness with the nobleness of courage.

courage. History does not speak so favourably of Apollonius. He is charged with greediness in his extravagant fees for his instructions, and with an insolent pedantry, which to Antoninus was only a subject of pity and raillery; for when this Stoic came to Rome, the emperor having sent for him to put into his hands his princely scholar, Apollonius, with an arrogance which to us must be astonishing, answered, "It is not fit for the master "to go to his scholar, but for the scholar to come "to his master." Antoninus, upon hearing this answer, fell a laughing, and said, "Apollonius "could come from Syria to Rome, but cannot "come from his house to the palace." Capit.

This prince knew the true value of things, and, if arrogance seemed to him worthy of contempt, goodness was always sure of his esteem. One day Marcus Aurelius bewailed the person's death who had taken care of his infancy, and the courtiers upbraided him with it as a weakness. "Suffer him, says Antoninus, "to be a man; for neither rank "nor philosophy can banish the sense of feeling." Marcus Aurelius's good heart.

There was a sufficient time allowed to know Marcus Aurelius before the titles which conveyed sovereignty were bestowed upon him. It was not till nine years had passed after his adoption, that this young prince, twice consul, twenty-six years of age, and now father of a daughter, received the tribunitial and proconsular powers; and, in order that the people might sincerely rejoice at this event, the emperor granted a discharge of all that was owing to his treasury; and, after the example of Adrian upon a like occasion, he burnt all the registers which contained the debts. He is associated in the tribunitial power. Tillem. T. Ant. Art. 10.

This same year, which the Romans reckon the nine hundredth from the building of the city, Antoninus celebrated the secular games with great magnificence. Secular games. Aur. Vict.

Marcus

Marcus Aurelius was very deserving of the honours by which Antoninus equalled him almost to himself. Never was a son more subject to a father; during almost twenty-three years he lived with him, whether in town or country, he never lay abroad but two nights, and behaved with so much probity, modesty, and discretion, that Antoninus's esteem and affection for him daily increased.

He governs with Antoninus.

He had all the emperor's confidence; he called him to his councils, associated him in the management of all his affairs, gave away no office, nor put any person in place, but in concert with him. Antoninus and Aurelius renewed the excellent example Vespasian and Titus had set to the world; a father and son were seen to possess and administer the sovereign power in common, without distrust, ambition, or jealousy, with a perfect tranquillity and peace; a proof of the superior virtue of both. Some wanted to instil suspicions into Antoninus; for the courts of the best princes are never without sowers of discord, who endeavour to raise themselves by the troubles they cause. Omulus, in particular, the same, no doubt, whom I mentioned before for his brutal liberty, seeing Aurelius's mother worshipping a statue of Apollo in a garden, dared to say to the emperor, "See a woman there who prays to "the gods that you may die soon, to make way for "her son to reign;" but such malevolent discourses made no impression upon Antoninus, nor did they in the least diminish that confidence he had so justly placed in Marcus Aurelius.

Commodus, his brother by adoption, is left by Antoninus in a private condition.

I observed before, Commodus was extremely different from his brother; brought up with all that care suitable to his high rank, and instructed by the best masters of grammar, eloquence, and philosophy, he made but small advances in these several studies, not so much for want of capacity as application: he had a great taste for pleasure; was passionately fond of the games in the circus, the combats

bats of gladiators, and all kinds of shows; in a word, pleasures and amusements had entire possession of him, and he shone in trifles.

Antoninus was much hurt with Commodus's vices; and, though he discovered something good in him, a lively genius, with an easiness in his manners which made him manageable, yet it was evident he only kept him in his palace from a respect to Adrian's memory, who had caused him to adopt him.

When he had once conferred upon him the quality and rank of his son, he could no longer dispense with giving him distinctions of honour; the day he gave him the manly gown, he bestowed some largesses upon the people; but, as if he had been afraid lest Commodus should have the honour of it, he contrived to have another motive for his liberality, by dedicating the temple he had erected to Adrian upon the same day. At the games which Commodus gave in his questorship, Antoninus placed him between himself and Marcus Aurelius. I have related his honouring him with two consulates; but all this did not take him out of the condition of a private person, and Antoninus did not invest him with any title which carried in it a right to the imperial power.

Sickness and death of Antoninus.

Commodus was consul for the second time with Aurelius his brother, who enjoyed the office a third time when Antoninus died. This prince had lived till upwards of sixty-three, without any kind of disorder, except frequent headachs, which interrupted his application to business; but no sooner was the complaint removed than he began his labours with fresh vigour. In the month of March, the year of Rome 912, and twenty-third of his reign, being then at Lorr, a pleasure-house he was particularly fond of, because he had been brought up there, he found himself troubled with an indigestion, which next day occasioned a fever; the third day of his illness he

he perceived the danger, and calling to him the pretorian prefect and his principal friends, he confirmed in their presence the choice he had made of Marcus Aurelius for his successor, and recommended to him the republic and his daughter: from that moment, he in some measure divested himself in his favour of the honours of the supreme power; and, to put him in actual possession, ordered to be carried to his house the golden statue of fortune, which the emperors had always kept in their chamber. The fever quickly seized his head; and, in his delirium, Antoninus talked only of the republic, and of kings who had given him grounds of complaint. According to Tillemont's conjecture, Vologesus king of Parthia was undoubtedly the principal subject of his thoughts, for he at that time was preparing for the war which he soon afterwards declared against the Romans. It seems that Antoninus had a lucid interval before he died, during which, having given *tranquillity* for the word to the pretorian tribunes, he turned about, and died with as much ease as if he had only fallen asleep.

Tillem. He was seventy-three years, five months, and seventeen days old, being born the nineteenth of September, in the year of Rome 837, and dying the seventh of March 912. He began to reign the tenth of July 889, and consequently his reign lasted twenty-two years, seven months, and six days. His ashes were carried to Adrian's tomb; and his two sons and successors, Marcus Aurelius and L. Verus, mounting the rostrum, made a funeral oration one after the other.

Capit. M. Aurel. 7.

Though old when he died, he was regretted as if he had been taken off in the flower of his age. It is needless to observe that they paid him all imaginable honours: his successors had no occasion to press the senate on that head; every one strove who should commend his goodness, clemency, uprightness of mind, and uniformity of manners; and all,

Honours paid to his memory. Capit. M. Ant.

all, with one common voice, voted to rank him among the gods, decreeing to him a temple, priests, a fraternity of Antoninians devoted to his worship, with anniversary feasts for the celebration of his memory. Aurelius and the Roman senate resolved to transmit to future ages their sentiments of him, by consecrating to his honour a lasting monument, which remains to this day, under the name of Antoninus's Pillar. Sextus Quintus rebuilt it, and it is now one of the principal ornaments of Rome. Nardini Roma Vetus, 9.

But what does most honour to that prince is this, that so great was the veneration for his name, that, almost during a whole century, all the emperors bore it, even those who were not connected with him by blood or adoption. This name was so dear to the citizens and the soldiers, that they could not consider as emperor any one who was not called Antoninus; wherefore Severus wished that the name of Antoninus, like that of Augustus, might be given to all those who rose to the imperial dignity; and accordingly he caused his two sons, Caracalla and Geta, to assume it: in a word, the name of Antoninus was in the minds of the people as something most sacred, and above that of a god; and, in fact, the greater part of their gods was not comparable to a prince who had rendered the name of Antoninus so venerable. Veneration for Antoninus's name, Tillem. T. Ant. Art. 2.

After so many ages, I find in myself an impression of respect and affection for an emperor who may be quoted as a model for sovereigns, and whose example, if followed, would perpetuate the happiness of mankind. I leave him with regret, and I hope my reader will indulge me in still giving here the picture of Antoninus, as drawn by his worthy successor Marcus Aurelius. We shall discover in it some new strokes, and I believe those already taken notice of will be reviewed with pleasure. Behold (says Marcus Aurelius) the good qualities I admired Picture of Antoninus by M. Aurelius. M. Aurel. 1. 1.

mired in my adoptive father, and which I propose to imitate. His gentleness, his unshaken constancy in resolution formed upon mature deliberation, his freedom from vain-glory, his indifference for what are commonly considered as honours and distinctions, his love of business, his close application to it, his readiness to hear advice, whoever gave it, his inflexible justice, always attentive to give every one his due, his skill in distinguishing what cases admit of indulgence, and what require severity. With a sociable disposition, he was careful not to put his friends under any disagreeable restraints; he did not oblige them to come to his entertainments, nor to attend him in the country; and, when for some reason or other, they could not conveniently do it, they found no alteration in him towards them. Faithful and constant in his friendship, he was a stranger to those warm sallies which sometimes turn to passion, and his friends had nothing to fear from sudden disgusts and caprice. In council he examined things with great care, and, far from satisfying himself with the first view, he went to the bottom of his subject, and considered it in all its different lights. Easily satisfied with what was present, he was always content. Nothing disturbed the serenity of his mind, nor preserved him from using that sagacity he was master of, in foreseeing what was to come; he was orderly in every thing, entering upon minute details without any noise or fracas, and without dwelling longer upon a subject than it deserved. Never were the public finances better managed than under his government, and he saw his conduct in this article endeavoured to be ridiculed with the greatest indifference. Flattery had no influence over him, and he suppressed all acclamations when they became indecent. Free from all superstition in his worship of the Divinity, he had no servile meanness in his behaviour with men, no desire to cultivate popularity at the expense of his dignity.

dignity. All his actions were directed by a steady and uniform discretion; no excess of any kind was to be seen, but he steered the same course, without being taken with the charms of novelty. His affable manners flowed with ease; being no more than the natural expression of his real sentiments, they never were overacted. There was no ostentation in any thing about him, and his example proves that a prince, in order to be respected, has no need of guards, magnificent dress, statues, and all that external pageantry; but that, by living as near as possible to the manner of a private person, he thereby preserves more grandeur and dignity in the government of the public.

Antoninus's genius, considered as that of a prince, was well improved. He was not to be accounted a scholar, a rhetor, or sophist, but a man of sense, furnished with useful knowledge, and from reflection very capable of governing himself and others. He did not value himself upon excelling in sciences which did not belong to him; and as he thought it mean to be jealous of those who professed them, and made them their study, he very readily yielded them the superiority in their own way, and gave them encouragement. He had a sincere regard for true philosophers, and did not insult those who assumed the name for a mask to their vices. He had a reasonable care of his health, observing the medium between a nice tenderness and a hurtful negligence, and by this management he succeeded without the help of physicians, whom he rarely consulted. His solid judgment made him steady not only in his way of thinking, but in his external conduct. The same employments, the same regulations, the same taste for places, one day of his life was like all the rest. With great openness and freedom, he was mysterious in nothing that did not require being concealed. Secrets, except for very good reasons, and particularly in matters of state, he was averse to. At the height of his grandeur he used no delicacies,

and as to the conveniences of life, he partook of them in a plain and even way, and if any accident prevented his having them, it gave him no uneasiness. He gave games and shows, and largesses by weight and measure, not from ostentation, nor with a view to popularity, but to discharge a debt exacted by custom. He built several public works, though not fond of building, because they were necessary or convenient. By no means nice in what regarded his person, he did not go to the baths at unusual hours, nor did he value himself upon the invention of new ragouts for his table; he was not curious about beautiful and fine stuffs for his dress, nor to please his eye with looking upon a number of slaves young and handsome. The plain and simple was what pleased him most. Without severity, presumption, or extravagant desires, he was moderate in all things; ever acting calmly and deliberately *, he deserved the encomium bestowed upon Socrates, that he was the only man who knew how to abstain and how to enjoy, whilst others had not resolution for either.

After this manner Marcus Aurelius has described Titus Antoninus, and it would be rashness in me to attempt to give new beauties to so fine a picture. I will only give an account in a few words of the state of literature during so glorious a reign.

Antoninus loved and cultivated learning. Capit. T. Ant. 2.

Antoninus was fond of learning, and, as we before related, had cultivated it, not as a scholar by profession, but as a statesman and prince. At the time Capitolinus wrote, that is, under Dioclesian, there were several speeches of his which displayed a taste for eloquence becoming his rank and character.

The favour of the prince, and the benign influences of peace, made learning flourish, but more with regard

* Ἐφαρμόσειε δ' ἂν αὐτῷ τὸ περὶ τοῦ Σωκράτους μνημονευόμενον, ὅτι καὶ ἀπέχεσθαι, καὶ ἀπολαύειν ἐδύνατο τούτων, ἃν πολλοὶ περὶ τε τὰς ἀποχὰς ἀθενοῦς, καὶ περὶ τὰς ἀπολαυσεις ἐνδοτικῶς ἔχουσι.

regard to philosophy than to the agreeable parts of literature, and among the Greeks more than the Romans.

Famous men for genius and their works in his reign.

We have no poet in Antoninus's time except one Julius Paulus, whom Aulus Gellius mentions in several places, and whom he greatly commends for his knowledge, a kind of merit not rated the first in a poet. Cornelius Fronto, Marcus Aurelius's master for Latin eloquence, was a famous orator, who even instituted a sect, and restored a taste for a grave manly style, which his predecessors had deviated from. It is a pity we have no part of his works remaining. At the same time, perhaps, with good authority, is placed Justin, the abridger of Trogus Pompeius, who has the merit of transmitting to us an extract from a valuable author we have lost.

Fronto an orator.

Justin.

Appian.

Greece has furnished us, in this reign, with an historian who undoubtedly is not comparable to those of better times, but whose labours, however, are now useful. I mean Appian of Alexandria, who wrote the whole Roman history down to Augustus, not in a connected way, but without any order of time, in detached pieces, dividing his subject according to the different countries and nations the Romans had war with; a bad plan which confounds the reader, as is easy to perceive from his account of the second Punic war, which is so mangled by this author, that, to have an entire knowledge of it, we must search for one part in the book which treats of the war with Spain, for another in that of Africa; and that which happened in Italy makes up a book entitled Annibal's war.

Ptolemy.

The most celebrated of those who wrote in Antoninus's reign, is undoubtedly Ptolemy, an astronomer and geographer, who made his observations and composed his works at Alexandria.

Maximus of Tyre.

Maximus of Tyre, a Platonic philosopher, was of the number of those masters Aurelius so highly commends. According to the common opinion of

the learned, it is he who wrote several philosophical discourses upon the principles of Plato.

Herodes Atticus. Philost. Soph. 2. 1.

Herodes Atticus, an Athenian by birth, was not only a man of genius, but distinguished with riches and honours. His nobility went as high as Cimon and Miltiades; his father Atticus had but a moderate fortune, but, by an unforeseen accident, was enabled to support the splendour of his family. In a house belonging to him he found an immense treasure. This discovery gave him more fear than joy. It was about the end of Domitian's reign, when a treasure of this kind might have proved fatal to its owner. But Nerva thought very differently, and he granted to Atticus, who informed him of it, and begged his orders, the free enjoyment of his riches. Atticus, who had a great soul, did not greedily seize this favourable answer, but, in a second letter to the emperor, he represented the treasure he had found as too much for a private person. "Make "use of it," replies the emperor, "without fear or "scruple; it is yours." Atticus, thus become rich on a sudden, and having married a great fortune, lived at Rome with the magnificence of a prince. We may judge of this from the following sketch.

He had the command of the free cities of Asia in the reign of Adrian, and perceiving Troas wanted water, in order to procure to the inhabitants so necessary a convenience, he desired of the emperor, and obtained, three millions of drachmas. He overlooked the work himself, and completed it in a grand style, so that the expense amounted to seven millions of drachmas, instead of three. Complaints of this were carried to the emperor, who seemed to give ear to them. Atticus wrote to him that an emperor should not be disturbed with trifles, "I give to my son," he adds, "four millions of "drachmas, which exceeds the sum you granted "me, and my son makes a present of it to the "city

Fifteen hundred thousand livres.

Three millions seven hundred thousand livres.

Two millions of livres.

"city of Troas." Such was the father of Herodes Atticus.

Born to a great fortune, he did not think it an excuse for ignorance and idleness, but studied eloquence in his own language with great application and success. His desire to succeed was so great, that having the misfortune to stop short in a speech which he made, when very young, to the emperor Adrian upon the banks of the Danube, shame and despair had almost prompted him to throw himself headlong into the river. He composed himself, however, and, thinking in a more reasonable way, his misfortune served only as a spur to increase his diligence; he made himself strong and hardy by exercise, and improved his natural quickness by a steady application, introducing study even into his meals, and devoting to it part of the night which he took from his sleep. In this way he acquired the glory he desired; he had the reputation of the best Grecian orator, and was made choice of to give Marcus Aurelius lessons of eloquence. His pains, though not very successful with a pupil of a predetermined taste for philosophy, were however rewarded, and Antoninus honoured him with a consulate in ordinary. In Philostratus and Suidas's time, there were discourses of his which carried the marks of a good natural disposition and an exalted genius; but they are all lost.

Herodes Atticus, with his father's vast riches, inherited likewise his taste for using them in a noble way. He built magnificent monuments, he consecrated rich offerings in the temples, at Athens, at Delphos, at Olympia, Pisa, and other places of Greece. He showed himself liberal to his friends, and, instead of amassing treasures, he lodged them in the hearts and grateful sentiments of those he shared them with. He even sometimes bestowed his liberalities on those who but little deserved them, and

Aulus Gell. 9, 2. Aulus Gellius relates an action of this kind which he saw, and which I must not omit.

A man with a cloke, long hair, and a beard down to his waist, comes to Herodes, who was with company, and begs money of him to buy bread: "Who "are you?" says Herodes to him. He, with an air of indignation and reproach, answered, that he was a philosopher, and thought it very strange that he should be asked what appeared so plain to the sight. "I see," replies Herodes, "the cloke and "the beard, but I do not yet see the philosopher; "show me you deserve the character.*" Upon this, some who were present said, they knew this pretended philosopher was a vagabond, an impudent beggar, who was always in the tavern, and who was sure to abuse and affront every one who did not give him what he wanted. "† Let us give "him, however, some money," says Herodes; "let "us honour humanity, though he dishonours it;" and with this gave him money sufficient to support him a month.

This is the beautiful side of Herodes Atticus's picture; what was praise-worthy in him was alloyed with several faults; he was fond of ostentation, voluptuous, passionate, and effeminate under affronts, which sometimes were done him unjustly; and, by these different vices, he drew upon himself several disagreeable affairs which sullied his reputation.

I proceed to the reign of Marcus Aurelius, whose government, with all the prudence and gentleness of Antoninus's, will afford us a greater variety of events.

* Video, inquit Herodes, barbam et pallium; philosophum nondum video.

† Demus huic aliquid æris, cujusmodi est, tanquam homines, non tanquam homini.

BOOK XX.

ANNALS OF MARCUS AURELIUS.

M. Aurelius Cæsar III.
L. Aurelius Commodus II. A. R. 912 A. C. 161.

Marcus Aurelius is acknowledged and declared emperor.

He associates in the empire his adoptive brother L. Commodus; makes him take the name of Verus, and promises him his daughter Lucilla in marriage.

The consulate of the two Augustuses.

The birth of Commodus, son of Marcus Aurelius, the thirty-first of August.

Sundry warlike commotions. Vologesus king of Parthia attacks Armenia and Syria at the same time.

The oracle of the false soothsayer Alexander was already famous.

Q. Junius Rusticus.
C. Vettius Aquilinus. A. R. 913. A. C. 162.

Inundation of the Tyber.

L. Verus departs for the war against the Parthians.

Three Roman generals distinguish themselves particularly in this war, Avidius Cassius, Martius Verus, and Statius Priscus.

The war lasts four years. The Romans gain many advantages, of which it is impossible to fix the precise time.

During this war L. Verus is married to Lucilla.

A. R. 914. A. C. 163. .....Lelianus.
.....Pastor.

A. R. 915. A. C. 164. M. Nonius Macrinus.
.....Celsus.

A. R. 916. A. C. 165. M. Gavius Orfitus.
L. Arrius Pudens.

Peace is concluded with the Parthians.

A great plague, which spreads from the East through all the empire, and lasts many years.

Death of Peregrinus.

A. R. 917. A. C. 166. Servilius Pudens.
L. Fufidius Pollio.

The triumph of Marcus Aurelius and of L. Verus.

They both receive the title of Father of their Country. The sons of M. Aurelius (he had two then) are called Cæsars.

Beginning of the war against the Marcomanni and other German nations. The two emperors go to pass the winter at Aquileia, to be in readiness to take the field early next year.

Martyrdom of St Polycarp.

A. R. 918. A. C. 167. L. Aurelius Verus Augustus III.
.....Quadratus.

Feats of war and negotiations with the barbarians during this and the following year.

Martyrdom of St Justin.

A. R. 919. A. C. 168. ..... Apronianus II.
.....Paulus II.

L. Verus dies of an apoplexy, returning from Aquilea to Rome. He is ranked among the gods.

M. Cornelius Cethegus. A. R. 921. A. C. 170.
C. Erucius Clarus.

Marcus Aurelius departs from Rome to return to Pannonia, and pushes briskly the war against the Marcomanni.

Before he departed, he had married his daughter Lucilla again to one Pompeianus, son of a Roman knight, but a man of merit.

Rufus Basseus, Pompeianus, and Pertinax, distinguish themselves in the war against the Marcomanni.

L. Septimus Severus. A. R. 922. A. C. 171.
L. Alfidius Herennianus.

Solemnity kept for the tenth year of M. Aurelius's reign.

..... Maximus. A. R. 923. A. C. 172.
..... Orfitus.

M. Aurelius Severus II. A. R. 924. A. C. 173.
T. Claudius Pompeianus.

..... Gallus. A. R. 925. A. C. 174.
..... Flaccus.

Marcus Aurelius, who, after his departure in the year 921, was not returned to Rome, always commanding the war in person against the Marcomanni, is shut up with his army in the country of the Quadi, and is in extreme danger, from which he is delivered by a miraculous rain obtained by the prayers of the Christians.

He

He forbids, under pain of death, to accuse Christians, without, however, exempting them from a capital punishment when they should be prosecuted before the judges.

A. R. 926.
A. C. 175.

..... Piso.
..... Julianus.

He made peace, or at least suspended the war, with the German nations, upon account of the revolt of Avidius Cassius in the East.

Avidius, a great soldier, famous for many exploits, who had repressed the Bucoles, who had risen in Egypt whilst M. Aurelius made war against the Marcomanni, revolts, and proclaims himself emperor.

M. Aurelius makes his son Commodus come to the army, and gives him the manly gown the seventh of July.

He prepares to march against Cassius, who was slain three months after he had taken the purple.

No Christian takes part in that war.

Clemency of M. Aurelius to the family and accomplices of Avidius.

M. Aurelius's voyage to the East.

Death of Faustina.

M. Aurelius takes a concubine.

A. R. 927.
A. C. 176.

T. Vitrasius Pollio II.
M. Flavius Aper II.

M. Aurelius visits Syria and Egypt, and comes to Athens, where he is initiated into the mysteries of Ceres. Privileges granted by him to the Athenians, and professors established in their city.

Upon his return to Rome, he triumphs for the Marcomanni, Quadi, and other German nations, with his son Commodus, the twenty-third of December.

L. Aurelius Commodus Cæsar. A. R. 928. A. C. 177.
..... Quintillus.

Discharge granted by M. Aurelius of all that is owing to his own treasury, or that of the public, for forty-six years.

He makes his son equal to himself, calling him Augustus and Father of his country.

Martyrs at Lyons.

The city of Smyrna, demolished by an earthquake, is rebuilt by the liberality of M. Aurelius.

.....Gavius Orfitus. A. R. 929. A. C. 178.
.....Julianus Rufus.

Marcus Aurelius, after marrying Commodus to Crispina, daughter of Bruttius Præsens, carried him with him to the war against the Marcomanni, which had been only suspended, or which at least had been renewed soon after the emperor had left Germany.

The Orfitian senatus-consultum.

Commodus Augustus II. A. R. 930. A. C. 179.
T. Annius Aurelius Verus II.

Marcus Aurelius takes the title of Imperator for the tenth and last time.

L. Fulvius Bruttius Præsens II. A. R. 931. A. C. 180.
Sex. Quintilius Condianus.

Death of Marcus Aurelius at Vienne upon the Danube, the seventeenth of March.

They decree him all kinds of honours human and divine.

MARCUS

MARCUS AURELIUS.

SECT. I.

Marcus Aurelius acknowledged emperor, associates his adoptive brother in the empire, and makes him take the name of Verus; judgment of this act of Marcus Aurelius. Largesses to the soldiers and people. Funeral of Antoninus. Happy and peaceable beginnings. Birth of Commodus. Inundation of the Tyber. Sundry warlike commotions. War with the Parthians. Verus goes into the East. Events of war. Verus has no part in the war. Entirely taken up with pleasure. He is adorned with three pompous titles, which he communicates to Marcus Aurelius. Completion of the projected marriage between Verus and Lucilla, daughter of Marcus Aurelius. After the conclusion of the war, Verus returns to Rome. He triumphs with Marcus Aurelius. A terrible plague which wastes the empire. The vices of Verus increased during his stay in Syria, they carry him into excesses. Picture of Marcus Aurelius's conduct. His evenness of mind. His deference for the senate. His attention to the happiness of the people. His condescension to the taste of the people in respect of shows and sports. Goodness the fundamental character of Marcus Aurelius. He erred in this through excess. In consequence of this, he is suspected of affectation in his virtue. He punishes informers. He causes justice to be administered, and does it himself, with a scrupulous exactness. Divers rules of Marcus Aurelius. History of the life and death of Peregrinus.

MARCUS

MARCUS AURELIUS, as I have observed, was called alone to the empire by the choice of Antoninus. The senate entered into his views, and conferred upon him all the titles of the sovereign power, part of which he had enjoyed before. It does not appear that Commodus, or any body for him, challenged any right to the throne, as being the adopted son of the deceased emperor. Aurelius, by an unheard-of generosity, had a mind to show that the supreme rank is not, as commonly imagined, incapable of division, and he desired his brother might be associated with him in the empire.

A. R. 912. M. Aurelius acknowledged emperor, associates his adoptive brother in the empire, and makes him take the name of Verus. Dio. Capitol. M. Anton. 7. and Ver. 3. and 4.

Authors do not inform us how this proposition, so new and so contrary to his interest, was received by the senate. All we know is, that it passed. Commodus instantly received the titles of Cæsar and Augustus, with the tribunitial and proconsular powers. He was acknowledged and proclaimed emperor, and made equal in all things to Aurelius, the high-priesthood excepted, which he reserved to himself. Aurelius, to unite himself still more with his colleague, made him his son-in-law, and solemnly promised him his daughter Lucilla in marriage; and at the same time, as if he had adopted him, he made him take the name of Verus, which was his own; and it is by this name we shall henceforth call this prince. The name of Antoninus belonged to both, being that of their adoptive father. They were both consuls, and the consulate of the two Augustuses makes an epocha in the annals. What was new and singular then became common afterwards, and was no more taken notice of.

Tillem. M. Aurel. art. 5.

It is necessary to remark, that the two Augustuses did not share the different provinces of the empire between them, in the manner of Octavianus and Antony. They governed them in common, just as two brothers in a private condition would manage an undivided inheritance. But, as in a partnership

partnership of power, the balance neither can nor ought to be absolutely equal, Aurelius had over his brother that pre-eminence which both superior age and merit entitled him to, notwithstanding the equality of power.

Judgment of that action of M. Aurelius.

This first action of Aurelius after he came to the empire is a kind of specimen of his whole reign, and anticipates the idea of his whole conduct. We shall ever see goodness, equity, and generosity shine, but not perhaps with that proper proportion necessary even in the exercise of virtues. We cannot, without doubt, but praise that greatness of mind which he showed in sharing with his brother a title which those who possess are generally so jealous to reserve to themselves. But was this magnanimity of his directed by prudence? Verus had none of the good qualities necessary for forming a good and great prince. He is only distinguished in history for his taste for indolence and pleasure. He became, and Aurelius might have foreseen it, an obstacle to the good his brother could and would have done in the government of the empire; and, if he had lived longer, who can tell but he might have been weary of paying a deference and respect which began to be uneasy? Besides, Aurelius, by leaving him in a private condition, did him no injustice; he had only followed the example and disposition of their common father. His judgment was prejudiced by his great goodness; and we must allow that here, and on many other occasions, it degenerated into real weakness. With his desire to do good, there was joined a desire of glory and popularity, which made him weak in his resolutions, distracting his thoughts. It is for this reason, notwithstanding the praises heaped upon him; we must prefer the character of Antoninus, as steadier and more determined.

Capit. M. Ant. 7. and 20.

Largesses to the soldiers and people.

From the senate, wherein the important resolutions I have just related had been taken and approved

approved of, the emperors went to the pretorian camp. So the military had but the second rank, the senate, under that series of good princes since Nerva, having recovered the pre-eminence, which belonged to it. Aurelius, as being the oldest, and having the best talent and facility of speaking, was the spokesman. For Verus, who had a genius naturally not very good, and this too lost in idleness, could not speak in public with any dignity; nay, his tongue did not move freely, and his pronunciation was very inarticulate. Twenty thousand sesterces were promised to each soldier; an enormous largess, but so established by custom that no emperor durst dispense with it.

Capit. Verus, 2. and 10.

Two thousand five hundred livres.

In order that the people likewise might rejoice at their promotion, the new emperors increased the free distribution of corn, and invited to it a greater number of children of both sexes.

After taking care of such things as would not admit of delay, they, with great pomp, celebrated the funeral of their father and predecessor. I have already related that both of them spoke a funeral oration; Verus, though a bad orator, could not be excused, and it was easy to have assistance.

Antoninus's funeral.

Capit. Verus, 2.

In the beginning of their reign, their union was perfect; Verus acted more like the lieutenant than like the colleague of Aurelius, and even showed a willingness to imitate the wisdom and prudence of his conduct.

In matters of government, they both took Antoninus for their model; so there was no occasion for regretting the want of his gentleness and goodness.

At first they enjoyed a little quiet, which Aurelius employed in gratifying his natural propensity to the improvement of his mind with philosophy and the sciences. Though an emperor, he was not ashamed to go to the lectures of Sextus of Cheronea, a Stoic philosopher, and nephew of Plutarch; he attended likewise the school of Hermogenes, the

rhetor, so famous for the brilliancy of his youth, and the loss of his genius in a more advanced age.

Birth of Commodus. Lamprid. Commod. 1, and 10.

The public joy was increased by the birth of twin-sons, who were born to Aurelius the thirty-first of August, and the first year of their father's reign. This was considered as a lucky event, not only as twins were rare, but still more, as history till then had not furnished but one example of an heir born to a reigning emperor. Britannicus is the first example, Commodus and Antoninus Geminus are the second; and it is not improper to observe, on this occasion, how much human joy, even when it seems well founded, is liable to uncertainty and disappointment in the event; Britannicus never came to the throne, and fell a victim to the jealousy of a cruel brother; Antoninus Geminus died under age; Commodus came to the sovereign power only to be the scourge of mankind, and to bring himself, after a few years, to a fatal and justly deserved end.

Inundation of the Tyber. Capit. M. Ant. 8.

A rapid inundation of the Tyber soon changed the face of the city, and occasioned complaints and lamentations to succeed the public joy. The destruction was frightful—a vast number of buildings destroyed, cattle drowned, provisions spoiled or lost, and, in consequence of this, want and famine. The emperors applied every remedy to these evils in their power, and, to effective remedies, their sympathetic goodness added a sentiment which gave great consolation to the unfortunate.

Sundry warlike commotions.

At the same time sundry warlike commotions were heard of in Germany, Great Britain, and Parthia; the war of the Catti in Germany, and that of the Britons, were objects of little consequence; but the Parthians, who had been quiet since Trajan's time, attacked the Romans with fresh forces and inflamed courage, and occasioned them at first great losses. Vologesus king of Parthia prepared for war, as I have said, in the reign of Antoninus. We know not, and it is to no purpose to inquire into, the motive

War with the Parthians.

tive for their taking up arms; it is natural to believe he was desirous to revenge the honour of his nation, so very ill used and humbled by Trajan; and that Antoninus's advanced age and pacific character, and afterwards the circumstance of a new reign, appeared to him to furnish a favourable opportunity which he ought not to lose. Dio. Capit. M. Ant. 8, 9, & Ver. 4, 7. Luc. Histor & Pseudom.

Armenia, which at all times had been a bone of contention to the two empires, afforded him the pretence he wanted. The Romans had been accustomed to appoint kings to that vast country, and Soëmus reigned at that time, under their authority. Vologesus, availing himself of the troubles which were raised, undertakes to revive his predecessor's claim to that crown; and it is conjectured he wanted to give it to Osroës, who might be his brother, or one of the princes of the blood.

Upon hearing of the invasion of the Parthians, Severianus, perhaps the governor of Cappadocia, put himself in readiness to march into Armenia, to oppose their progress: before he departed, he was weak enough to go and consult, about the success of his enterprise, the famous impostor Alexander, (of whom we shall speak more particularly hereafter), and he received from him an oracle promising him a most glorious victory and a triumphant return: the event was quite contrary; Severianus having encamped near Elegia, a city of Armenia, was surrounded by the Parthian army commanded by Osroës: there he and his men for three days suffered all the horrors of a cruel hunger, and, as they would not surrender, he was cut in pieces, with all his army. It is probable that, in consequence of this victory of the Parthians, Soëmus being dethroned fled to Rome, where he became a senator, and even consul. Dio. ap. Val. p. 775, and ib. Val.

Meantime Vologesus, from another quarter, made an irruption into Syria, and put to flight Atilius Cornelianus, governor of that province; so

that the Syrians being alarmed, prepared to change masters, and to subject themselves to the strongest.

These events relate to the first year of the reign of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus.

Verus goes to the East.

A war so important, and of which the disadvantageous beginnings raised a dread of still more fatal consequences, seemed to demand the presence of one of the emperors. Peaceable employments suited best with Aurelius's genius, though, when occasion required, he knew how to accommodate himself to circumstances, and to make a proper figure at the head of an army. Verus had a robust constitution, and was able to bear fatigue; besides, as he was lost in effeminacy and debauch, Aurelius hoped that the cares of war would bring him off from his vices; at least it was a comfort to him not to be an eye-witness of his brother's and his colleague's disgraceful behaviour, and of his exposing himself in the capital of the empire; it was therefore determined that Verus should go to the war against the Parthians.

Marcus Aurelius was much disappointed in his expectations; Verus, before he went out of Italy, showed what kind of general he would make, and how much more he was taken up with pleasure than business; scarcely was he got out of the presence of a brother of too much discretion to be agreeable to him, than he gave himself up to all the excesses of the table in every country-house he found in his way, and by that means brought upon him a disorder which detained him at Canusium. Aurelius, studious to discharge every duty, went immediately to his sick brother, and made solemn vows to the gods to obtain his recovery; Verus got well, but continued the same.

The very bad news he every day received from the East did not hasten his voluptuous manner of travelling; after passing a considerable time in hunting at Apulia, he embarked, but staid at Corinth and

and Athens, making parties of music, and concerts upon the sea: he stopped at all the maritime towns of Asia Minor, of Lycia, and of Pamphylia, to enjoy the entertainments and diversions that were made upon his arrival; at last he comes to Antioch, a city much given to pleasure, and there he fixed his residence the four years the war lasted, living agreeably to the fashion of the place and softness of the climate; gaming, drinking, and good cheer, lewdness of every kind, not even excepting that which is most criminal, employed all his time; and he left the carrying on of the war to his lieutenants.

He had very able ones, who joined bravery to military knowledge, and a zeal for the observance of discipline; history mentions three of the principal, Statius Priscus, Avidius Cassius, who afterwards rebelled, and of whom, therefore, we shall have occasion to speak more fully; and Martius Verus, of whom Dion gives us this character.

He was not only a man who could conquer his enemies by force of arms, prevent them by his diligence, and deceive them by his arts, but to those talents which constitute the merit of a general, he joined those of an able negotiator. Eloquent and persuasive, liberal and magnificent, dexterous in alluring with flattering expectations, his society was much liked, and in all his words and actions there was a grace and dignity. No resentment could withstand his insinuating manner; he knew how to set every thing in the most advantageous light to increase a confidence in him, so that the barbarians, finding him both a formidable soldier and an amiable man, were afraid of having him for an enemy, and sought his friendship. Dio. ap. Suidam in Μάρκιος.

The three commanders I have named did great things, but the records which remain of them do not inform us of particulars. We need not regret the loss of histories compiled at that time by weak authors without taste. Lucian has left us a sensible Events of the war.

and ingenious criticism upon them. It were to be wished this excellent critic had not been contented with setting forth the faults of others, but, when he was upon so entertaining a subject, had given us the model of a history agreeably and judiciously penned; but he has not done it, and we are obliged to collect pieces scattered here and there, and represented in an ambiguous way by unskilful abridgers.

The Romans in this war had Syria to defend, and their rights to recover upon Armenia, by driving out the king Vologesus had placed there. To answer these purposes, it appears they assembled two armies; that Avidius had the command of that of Syria; Statius Priscus and Martius Verus acted on the side of Armenia.

In both places success was favourable to the Romans; they obtained great and repeated victories; the most famous and distinguished was that where Cassius entirely defeated the Parthians near Europus, a city of Syria.

As he was an active diligent officer, he did not confine himself to driving the Parthians out of the Roman province; improving his victory, he threw a bridge over the Euphrates, in spite of all the opposition the enemy, who were on the other side of the river, could make; and having entered Mesopotamia, he traverses every part of it, and comes to Seleucia upon the Tigris, which he pillages and burns, though at first they had received him as a friend; some, upon this account, charge him with treachery, whilst others pretend the Seleucians first broke the agreement; he likewise took Ctesiphon, and demolished Vologesus's royal palace. They add, he went as far as Babylon, which is not far from the two cities I have mentioned.

He had not the same success in his return; invincible against the Parthians, he had much to suffer from hunger and sickness: from these two scourges he lost a great part of his army, and brought back

back his victorious legions into Syria considerably weakened.

In Armenia Statius Priscus took Artaxates, and put a garrison into Cænopolis; Martius Verus kept it in subjection, though in a fermentation, and disposed to rebel; he made himself master of the governor Tiridates, who, after having a principal part in the commotions of Armenia, and after killing the king of the Heniochi, in alliance with the Romans as it appears, and reproved for these excesses by Martius, had dared to draw his sword against him. The arms of the conquerors penetrated as far as Media, that is, probably into Atropatene, near to Armenia.

End of the war.

This is all we know of the exploits of the Romans in this war of four years. The general success was such as they could wish, and the Parthians must have been entirely driven out of Armenia, since Soëmus was again put in possession of the crown by Martius Verus.

Our authors do not inform us how the war was ended; it is more than probable there was a treaty concluded between the two nations; and Tillemont conjectures that the Parthians gave up Mesopotamia to the Romans. This peace lasted thirty years.

Verus had no part in the operations of war, being entirely taken up with pleasure.

The emperor Verus had not so much as seen the war; he only came twice near to the banks of the Euphrates, at the solicitation of the ministers and counsellors Aurelius had given him; as to the rest of his time, he passed the winter at Laodicea in Syria; the summer at Daphne, a suburb of Antioch; the spring and autumn in the city of Antioch itself; and in these different places of residence he was taken up entirely with shows, hunting-parties, and all sorts of diversions and debauches, rushing into them without the least reserve; whilst Aurelius, who was at Rome, had his attention, at that distance, fixed upon the operations of the war, gave his orders, and sent provisions. Verus, by so base a conduct,

was despised by the Syrians, who, naturally given to ridicule, did not fail to rally him, and frequently in a full theatre.

He is honoured with three pompous titles, which he communicates to M. Aurelius.

Though he had so small a share in the victory, the soldiers nevertheless proclaimed him imperator three times, and conferred upon him the names of Armeniacus, Parthicus, and Medicus. These same names were given likewise to his colleague, and confirmed to both by the senate; but Aurelius, not desirous of a glory to which he did not think he had much right, only accepted it out of complaisance to his brother; and, as a mark of the union subsisting between them, he was modest in the use of them, and, upon Verus's death, entirely dropped them.

Completion of the projected marriage between Verus and Lucilla, daughter of M. Aurelius. Capit. M. Ant. 9. and Ver. 7.

It was during the course of this war with the Parthians that Verus's marriage with Lucilla, Aurelius's daughter, was completed; we know not exactly the year when it was celebrated; the princess must have been fifteen at the beginning of the war. It appears her father intended to have conducted her himself to her husband; Aurelius's design in this probably was to try what effect his presence would have upon Verus, and whether it would not make him ashamed of his irregularities; he actually went with her to Brindes, but there, having discovered that they suspected him of wishing to take to himself the honour of the victory over the Parthians, as he was excessively jealous of his character, and even more afraid in that respect than was proper for one who knew his own virtue, he changed his resolution, and returned to Rome, leaving his daughter with Annia Cornificia, her sister, and attended by Civica, Verus's uncle. Lucilla had besides a great retinue, and she travelled with all the magnificence becoming her rank; but M. Aurelius, who well knew how expensive such passengers are to provinces, and to the magistrates who govern them, wrote to the proconsuls, forbidding them to be at any charge on account of his daughter.

Verus

Verus came to meet her as far as Ephesus, highly pleased with the scruple which had detained M. Aurelius in Italy, and glad at not having such a spectator of his disgraceful conduct.

When the war was ended, he gave territories to several princes in alliance with the empire, and governments of provinces to the senators who had attended him; and, having settled every thing in the East, he with regret left his delicious abode in Syria to return to Rome, and to be with Aurelius. Upon his coming away, he brought with him, as trophies of his victory, not captive kings, after the fashion of the old Roman generals, but comedians, actors of farces, with all the instruments of effeminacy, and every art to increase and preserve it. Capit. Ver. 8.

After the war was ended, Verus returns to Rome.

The senate decreed a triumph to both emperors; they likewise received the name of Father of their Country, which had been often, but in vain, offered to Aurelius, who would not accept of it in his brother's absence. Verus desired the name of Cæsar for Aurelius's sons. The union between them, at least so far as appeared, was entire; and it was the chief ornament of the triumph that they celebrated together, carried in the same chariot, and having with them all Aurelius's children of both sexes, though most of them were under age. Tillemont dates their triumph in the year of J. C. 166, which we reckon the 917th of Rome. Capit. M. Aut. 12. & Ver. 8. A. R. 917.

He triumphs with M. Aurelius.

The victory over the Parthians was more than balanced by the fatal consequences of a plague it brought along with it; different accounts are given of its beginning, mixed with fabulous circumstances; it is, however, certain the Romans caught it in the enemy's country, and when Verus returned to Rome, it followed him every where, and spread itself in all the provinces he passed through; with him it entered the metropolis, and from thence got into Gaul, and even as far as the Rhine; it seized the nations, the armies, the cities, and the villages; Capit. M. Aut. 13. and 8. Amm. Marc. L. XXIII. Oros. VII 15.

A terrible plague, which ravages the empire.

in

in Italy the lands were uncultivated for want of men to labour; in Rome the dead were carried away in cart-loads, and the government was obliged to be at the expense of their burials on account of their great numbers, and the negligence of their relations, who were often infected with the same disorder; it was not only the common people which it carried off by thousands; a great many illustrious persons died of it; to some of the principal of whom Aurelius erected statues.

It is unnecessary to inform the reader that this prince, with so much paternal affection for his country, was very sensibly affected with this shocking calamity which laid waste the empire, and that he spared neither pains nor expense in applying every remedy in his power.

Verus's effeminacy, which every day increased from his habits of pleasure, and his constant relish for trifles, gives no reason to think he interested himself enough in the people's sufferings to be greatly concerned, or to seek for remedies.

Verus's vices, increased during his stay in Syria, become excessive. Capit. Ver. 4—8.

His vices had much increased during his stay in the East; he there found every thing that could add to his natural disposition for pleasure; and the respect he had for his brother, the only check upon his conduct, was considerably weakened. Accustomed to independence for almost five years, Verus, upon his return to Rome, would be no longer under restraint; he endeavoured to regulate several things without Aurelius's knowledge, and, instead of hearing and consulting with him, he confided in wretched freedmen, who studied and flattered his passions; the comedians, puppet-players, musicians, whom, as I mentioned before, he had brought with him from Syria, were his usual company; and every day, after supping with his brother, he came home to make up for the time he had lost at a modest and sober repast with a debauch where men of pleasure only were his guests, and where the table

was

was served by the dregs of the people, the disgrace of the city, and the pests of all good manners. With this worthless company he often passed the night, till, overcome with sleep, he was obliged to be carried in men's arms to his bed.

Capitolinus has preserved to us a particular account of one of these entertainments, where the profusion was immense. It was not enough for Verus to be served with whatever wines and meats were delicate and rare; there were twelve with him at table, and to each guest he gave the young cupbearer who had served him with drink, and a butler with a complete service of plate, and the same live animals, whether beasts or birds, whose flesh had been at the table; every thing he drank out of was valuable, both in itself and its ornaments; gold, silver, crystal, and precious stones; every time any one drank, the cup was changed, and was always given to him who used it; he gave them chaplets of flowers, which were out of season, with pendents woven with gold, and gold cups filled with the most exquisite perfumes; and, to carry them home, he gave them vehicles all brilliant with silver, with a set of mules, and a muleteer to drive them. The expense of this entertainment was reckoned to amount to six millions of sesterces, or seven hundred and fifty thousand livres. When Aurelius was informed of it, he was much concerned at such foolish extravagance; this was all he could do after his imprudence in raising Verus to an equal share of power with himself.

Having no longer a right to reprimand or censure with authority, he endeavoured to instruct him by his example. Verus had built a pleasure-house upon the Clodian way in Etruria, where he gave himself up to his usual extravagances with his freedmen and other proper companions. He invited his brother to come there to see him; Aurelius did not refuse his invitation, and passed five days there, employing

ploying himself in his imperial functions, holding councils, and administering justice; but Verus was incapable of seeing the beauty of this virtuous conduct, and the disgrace of his own; his diversions and debauches admitted of no interruption; and Aurelius returned to Rome with less hope than ever of his amendment.

Verus had likewise learned in Syria to spend the nights in gaming; at other times he would imitate Nero in his scandalous pastimes; disguised, with his head in a cap which covered part of his face, he ran up and down the streets of Rome in the night, went into the taverns and places of debauch, and there quarrelled with every mean fellow he met; he often brought back to the palace marks of the blows he had received in these indecent scuffles.

He was fond of chariot-races, and was a zealous favourer of the green faction or company; he interested himself for the charioteers of that livery so openly, and with so much partiality, that frequently, as he was sitting by Aurelius at the games in the circus, he was reproached and affronted by their rivals the blues. Vying with Caligula in his extravagances, he was ridiculously fond of a horse he called the *bird;* he gave him raisins and pistaches to eat, and had him brought into his palace with clothes of purple; he would have his fleetness rewarded with bushels of pieces of gold and marks of honour, and called after his horse's name a very large cup, which he used in his high debauches.

Verus had every vice but cruelty; it is even uncertain whether he had not a natural disposition to it, which he could not exert because of the obstacle which Aurelius's great goodness put to it. This suspicion may be suggested from his passion for gladiators; so fond was he of this inhuman diversion as to forget himself and turn actor, at least whilst he was in Syria, and frequently made it a part of his entertainments. He that could please himself

himself with shedding the blood of mean persons, would very probably, had he been absolute master, not have spared that of the most illustrious.

A picture of M. Aurelius's conduct; his evenness of mind. Capit. M. Ant. 16. & Vict. Epit.

Let us turn our eyes from this frightful picture, and employ ourselves in describing Aurelius's virtues, a more agreeable subject to honest minds: He was born one of those virtuous characters who never know what it is to be disturbed with passion; it is observed of him from his infancy, that neither sorrow nor joy ever altered the serenity of his countenance.

Dio. ap. Val.

Grandeur produced no change in him; adopted by Antoninus, distinguished with the appellation of Cæsar, associated in the tribunitial power, he was always the same; obedient to his father, affable to all, plain and modest in his behaviour; he did not even assume the badges of dignity but upon extraordinary occasions, and when he appeared in public with the emperor; at all other times he lived and was dressed like a private person: he went to hear the philosophers in their schools; visited his friends when sick, and in the morning received their compliments in his bed-chamber, without any form or state.

Plato de Repub. V.

When he came to the sovereign power, he governed in such a manner, that every one applied to him the famous saying of Plato, which proclaims perfect happiness to people and states, when they have philosophers for their kings, or their kings are philosophers.

His deference to the senate. Capit. M. Ant. 10. & 11.

He carried his deference to the senate further than any of his predecessors had done: he faithfully discharged the duties of a senator, never missing one assembly when he was at Rome, and often returning from the country to be present; he staid till it was ended, and never went away till the consul had dismissed the assembly with the usual speech: far from entertaining any jealousy of the senate's authority, he raised it upon every occasion, and submitted himself

Dio. p. 814. himself to it. When he went to the war against the Marcomanni, which I shall presently speak of, he desired leave of the senate to take the money he wanted out of the public treasury, "For," says he, "every "thing belongs to the senate and people; we have "nothing which we do not hold of you; the very "palace we inhabit is your property *." He frequently left matters of his own cognisance to the determination of the senate: he had a pleasure in admitting not only the magistrates who were in office, but old pretors and consuls, to have a share in the exercise of the government, assigning to them departments and business of consequence, and creating new offices, not only with a view to the good of the public service, but in order to have it in his power to gratify a great many of the senators with
Capit. 22. places. In every thing relating to peace or war, he always took the advice of the best heads of that august order; and he often said, "† It is more rea-"sonable that I should follow the opinion of so "many illustrious friends, than for me to pretend "they should all submit to my single determina-"tion." Incapable of any jealousy and suspicion, he suffered the citizens of the first rank to form their household after the model of the imperial palace,
Capit. 10. and to have the same officers as himself. He was careful of the dignity of the senate, giving admission to none but who had given good proof of themselves, and whom he knew perfectly well. The honour even of the individuals who composed the assembly was dear to him. If at any time it happened that a senator was concerned in a criminal affair, he first made a private inquiry before he would

* Ὁ Μάρκος πάντα της βούλης καὶ τȣ δήμȣ ἔλεγεν εἶναι. Ἡμεῖς γὰρ, ἔφη (πρὸς την βȣλην λέγων) ȣ̓τως ȣ̓δὲν ἴδιον ἔχομεν, ὥςε καὶ ἐν τῇ ὑμετερᾳ οἰκια οἰκȣ̃μεν.

† Æquius est ut ego tot et talium amicorum consilium sequar, quam ut tot et tales amici meam unius voluntatem sequantur.

would suffer it to be made public, and, when the case was to be tried, he would have the accused judged by his peers, and no senator have a Roman knight for his judge. The wisest of his predecessors had set him this example, and he imitated them likewise in supporting with his liberalities senators who, without any fault of their own, were unable to maintain their dignity.

His attention to make his people happy. Capit. 12.

The people enjoyed their rights and liberties under the government of Aurelius. This prince put them under no restraints but such as were necessary to prevent their doing wrong; even in these cases he acted with gentleness, making use of entreaties rather than threats, and rewards than punishments. Though himself without vice, he was notwithstanding convinced of the necessity of tolerating it in others, provided it was not carried to extravagant lengths, and often used this judicious observation, "* We cannot make men as we would have them; "we must bear with them such as they are, and "make the best of them we can." This moderation succeeded, and, if we believe Capitolinus, he had the satisfaction to see the bad become good, and the good to increase in virtue by his care: this general expression must undoubtedly be understood with some restrictions; however, it serves to show us, that this prince's example and prudent administration made virtue respected in his reign. He forbade baths being used promiscuously by both sexes, and by salutary regulations curbed the licentiousness of manners, the corruption of youth, and the disorderly behaviour of women; happier in the reformation of the city and state than of his own family, which Faustina, by her dissolute behaviour, loaded with disgrace.

Dio. p. 815.

Capit. 29.

He

* Ποιῆσαι μὲν τινι ἀνθρώπους ὁποίους βούλεται ἐχειν ἀδύνατον ἐστι· τοῖς ὃ δὴ ὄντι προσήκει ἐς ὅ, τι ἂν τις αὐτῶν τῳ κοινῳ χρήσιμος ἢ χρηζεσθαι.

He was extremely careful not to oppress the people; and, in order to prevent it, the first method he used was a prudent economy of the public finances, never draining them with inconsiderate largesses: he was so steady in this point as to refuse the victorious soldiers a gratification they desired, upon a signal victory being obtained over the Marcomanni: "* Whatever is given you more than "your due, must be taken from the blood of your "fathers and neighbours." In the time of an extreme distress, rather than charge the provinces with new taxes, he chose rather to sell his moveables, and the jewels of his palace; he put to sale the statues and valuable pictures which ornamented his apartments, his gold and silver plate, the precious stones which Adrian had amassed at great expence; and he even went so far as the empress's wardrobe, the gold and silk stuffs which he wore; this sale lasted two months, and it furnished Aurelius with the expences of the war: after the victory he declared that he would purchase again whatever he had been obliged to sell, and would give the money to those who would receive it. But he left every one at full liberty, without giving any trouble either to those who returned what they had bought, or to those who did not: it is unnecessary to observe, that a prince with so much goodness did not suffer more to be exacted of the people than was legally imposed upon them, and that he punished extortioners with severity. In very pressing circumstances from the want of money, he even sometimes remitted what was due to his own of the public treasury, when it appeared the levying it would be too burdensome. Dion mentions a discharge of this kind granted by Aurelius, and extended to the space of forty-six years, precisely when the renewal of the war with the Marco-

Dio. p. 803.

Capit. 11. & 23. & Dio. p. 8. 4.

* Ὅσῳ ἂν πλεῖον τι παρὰ τὸ καθῆκον λάβωσι, τοῦτ' ἐκ τοῦ αἵματος τῶν τε γονέων σφῶν καὶ τῶν συζ.νῶν ἐισπραξεται.

Marcomanni, necessarily put him to very great expense.

Under every calamity, the nations and cities found him ready to give his assistance: in a time of famine, he made a free distribution through all Italy of foreign corn, which he had amassed in great quantities at Rome. He rebuilt Smyrna, Ephesus, and Nicomedia, which had been ruined by an earthquake, and Carthage, laid waste by fire. Aurel. Vict.

Even the pleasures and diversions of shows, which he thought necessary for the multitude, did not appear to him unworthy of his care; he was abundantly sensible how empty and trifling they were in themselves, and when he assisted at them, instead of feasting his eyes with such idle amusements, he employed himself in something useful, as reading letters, and hearing those who had any petitions to make him: but his indifference and contempt for the games did not prevent his accommodating himself to the people's taste, who were fond of them; he gave them with magnificence, and at one feast he caused a hundred lions to be killed with arrows. Even when he was from Rome, he would not suffer the people's diversions to stop on account of his absence; and he charged the richest of the senators to defray the expenses, according to the practice observed at all times in the republic. He made it his business to refute, by his actions, the reports which had been spread upon the departure of the gladiators he had carried with him to the war against the Marcomanni. He intended, it was said, to retrench the public diversions, and to tie up all the world to the austerity of a philosophical life: this engaged him to show still more indulgence in this point; he even carried it to an extravagant length, by allowing pantomime entertainments, so contrary to all good manners, and which had been banished by some of his predecessors, who, however, had not the same regard for virtue as he. He only mode- His compliance with the people's tastes for shows and games. Capit. 2, 15, 17, 23.

rated the expense of the games, by reducing the salary which comedians could demand to five pieces of gold, and forbidding ever to give more than ten *.

Goodness was the foundation of M. Aurelius's character.

From what has been related, we see that goodness was the foundation of Aurelius's character: he so cherished this virtue, that he made her a divinity, to whom he built a temple in the capitol; he exerted it even towards the guilty, and in the punishment of crimes he always applied less severity than the law required. A pretor, by his ill behaviour, deserved to be removed from his office. Aurelius left him the title, and only deprived him of the exercise of his function, which he transferred to his colleague. He bore with great temper the audacious liberty of those who were not afraid to be wanting in their respects to him: A man of a very bad character, and disgraced by that infamy which follows the profession of a gladiator, coming up to him and desiring a place, Aurelius told him first to remove the ill impressions he had given of himself to the public. "I "am in the same situation with many others," answers the candidate, with great insolence; "I see "several of my associates in crimes become pre-"tors." This reply carried in it a reproach to the prince himself, who only returned it with gentleness and good humour.

Dio, ap. Val.

Always inclined to pardon offences done to himself, nothing could make him do violence to his generous disposition, neither the enormity of the crime, nor the fear lest impunity should encourage others to do the like: he even suffered those who had been guilty of open rebellion, and had taken up arms against himself and his son, to enjoy their life, their rank, and fortune; and if there were some put to death, it was not by his order.

It

* Five pieces of gold are equal to a hundred and twenty-five deniers, or sixty-two livres ten sous. The ten make a hundred and twenty-five livres.

It has always been a part of Roman politics to treat foreign princes with rigour. Aurelius would not suffer his conduct towards them to give the lie to his clemency; he was satisfied with banishing into Great Britain the governor Tiridates, who, as I related before, had raised commotions in Armenia; and we shall see him using the same gentle method with Ariogeses king of the Quadi.

The shedding of blood, even of the meanest person, gave him horror; he corrected the inhumanity of the gladiators, giving them foils instead of swords, that they might fight as champions, without endangering their lives. A little boy, who danced upon a rope, being killed by a fall, Aurelius ordered for the future that matresses should be put under the rope-dancers when they performed, and this reformation continued. In the time of Dioclesian, the practice still remained of spreading nets under the rope-dancers. A lion, who had been accustomed to devour men, was exhibited to the populace, with whom curiosity extinguishes every sentiment; Aurelius would not see it, and, though earnestly solicited by the cries of the multitude, he refused to give the master of the lion his freedom. He silenced them by ordering a herald to publish with a loud voice, "That this man has "done nothing to deserve a reward."

Dio. p. 815. Capit. 12. Dio. ap Val.

Aurelius's goodness, as I before observed, was not always kept within proper bounds; and he knew not how to preserve that wise medium, which, whilst it keeps at a distance from severity, does not run into weakness. He was over-indulgent to all about him. I have taken notice of the gross mistake he made from this principle, by associating his brother in the empire; his indulgent behaviour to his wife and his sons will furnish us with an opportunity to repeat the same observation. He loved nothing so much as philosophy; and this passion, so laudable in itself, became the occasion of much in-

He erred in this way by over-doing.

Capit. 23. & Dio. p. 815. justice. As every one knew that philosophy was the way to gain the prince's favour, a great many applied to this study, not with a view to improve their understandings or their hearts, but to make their fortune; they took the mask of philosophy without any of its sentiments, and Aurelius's goodness was a dupe to their hypocrisy; they acquired riches, and came to employments, where they frequently used their power to injure both individuals and the republic. Aurelius's indulgence likewise to criminals was carried too far, as may be seen in Capit. 13. the following instance: An impostor haranguing, from the top of a tree, a multitude in the Campus Martius, predicted that fire would fall from heaven, and the world come to an end, when he himself should be changed into a stork: upon the day he had mentioned, he let himself slide down the tree, and caused a stork he had concealed in his bosom to fly away: his project did not stop with this gross imposition, he aimed at what was equally dangerous and criminal; some profligate fellows, in concert with him, were to set fire to different parts of the city, and to pillage during the confusion; the impostor could not execute his plan; he was seized and carried to the emperor, to whom he confessed the whole; such a crime certainly deserved no mercy, nevertheless Aurelius pardoned him.

In consequence of this, he has been suspected of affectation in his virtue. Capit. 29. & Dio. p. 815.

This prince, by carrying his virtue to such unreasonable lengths, has occasioned his sincerity to be suspected. Affectation has been thought to have entered into a goodness which exceeded all bounds, and vanity to have had a greater share in it, than the sentiments of the heart, which, when they are real, always act with simplicity, and without ostentation. Dion refutes this reproach, by opposing to it that constant evenness of conduct which Aurelius observed for so many years, first under Antoninus, and afterwards in a reign of twenty years, without one contradictory action. It must be owned, this proof

is

is of great weight, and it would be manifest injustice to doubt Aurelius was naturally good. But have not the fear of blame, and a passion for praise, increased the sentiments of a noble soul, and the lights of a sound reason? It is difficult to persuade one's self of this; and we shall find, in what remains of this history, some parts so overacted, as it is not easy to believe them sincere.

A prince so desirous of the glory of doing good took care not to fail in point of justice, a virtue of strict obligation. The rights of the public treasury furnished mischievous people with opportunities of vexing peaceable citizens with troublesome suits and hateful chicaneries. Aurelius prevented these abuses; he not only neglected informations for increasing his revenue, and which might produce confiscations for his interest, but he renewed and made the ancient ordinances be observed against all informers convicted of falsehood.

He punishes informers. Capit. 2. & 12.

In general he caused justice to be administered, and did it himself, with a scrupulous exactness. All rashness in judgments he condemned very much, and obliged a pretor to begin anew a criminal trial which had been hurried over, and to grant the accused another hearing. He himself sometimes employed eleven or twelve days in studying and discussing a process of importance, neither grudging his time nor his trouble, when truth was to be discovered; * for he was very laborious, adds the historian, and conducted all his affairs by weight and measure; he neither spoke, nor wrote, nor did any thing which he had not maturely considered; and

He makes justice be administered, and does it himself with scrupulous exactness. Capit. 24. & Dio. p. 80 2.

3 sometimes

* Φιλόπονος γὰρ ἦν, καὶ ἀκριβῶς πᾶσι τοῖς τῇ ἀρχῇ προσήκουσι προσεφέρετο· καὶ οὐδὲν ἐν παρέργῳ ἔτε ἔλεγεν ἔτε ἔγραφεν ὅτε ἐποίει, ἀλλ' ἔστιν ὅτε καὶ περὶ τὰ βραχυτάτα ἡμέρας ὅλας ἀνήλισκεν, ὃν ἀξιῶν αὐτοκράτορα ἐξ ἐπιδρομῆς τι πράττειν· καὶ γὰρ ἐνόμιζεν ὅτι κἂν ἐλαχίστου τι παρίδῃ, διαδοθὲν αὐτῷ τοῦτο καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἄλλα πάντα οἴσει. *Dio.*

sometimes, what to others appeared of little consequence, employed him for whole days. He was of opinion that a prince ought never to determine lightly, because negligence in trifles brings a reflection upon his conduct even in matters of consequence.

Capit. 10. His fondness for business, and his zeal for the despatch of lawsuits, so troublesome and destructive to citizens by their length, engaged him to cut off a great many days of vacation which the courts of justice had taken; he carried the days for hearing of business so far as to two hundred and thirty in a year: our year is not near so filled up.

Different rules of M. Aurelius. Capit. 9, 10. & 11 Instit. Justin III. 3. & 4. Aurelius made many rules, in which his equity, and vigilant care of the public, are nobly displayed.

The severity of the old Roman law was such, that only the relations by the father could succeed to one another; so that mothers did not inherit from the children, nor the children from the mothers. Titus Antoninus began to correct this rigidness; and by a * decree of the senate, passed under his authority, he gave to unfortunate mothers, who, against the order of nature, saw their children die before themselves, the sad consolation of being at least their heirs; Aurelius made a very necessary supplement to this regulation, by calling children to the succession of their mother: this mitigation was afterwards extended much further by the Christian emperors.

Capit. As one of the most important objects of the general policy of a society is the guardianship of minors, Aurelius appropriated this particular branch of

* This decree of the senate is called in the law Tertullian, from the name of Tertullus, who was consul when it was passed. The text in the institutes makes Adrian the author of it, either from a mistake, or by giving to Titus Antoninus the name of his adoptive father. I do not enlarge upon the dispositions of this law, no more than upon the Orphitian decree, under Marcus Aurelius. These discussions belong to lawyers.

of business to the department of one of the pretors, whereas, before, custom and law had left it to the consuls, who, being distracted with a great variety of business, could not give to it that attention which was necessary.

He carried his views to the causes relating to rank or condition, which are always of infinite consequence, but especially among the nations who admit of the greatest possible distinction between men, that of liberty and slavery. In order that every citizen might easily prove his condition, if at any time it should be contested, Aurelius renewed an old obsolete regulation of Servius Tullius; he ordered the name of every free child born in Rome, to be carried, within thirty days after the birth, to the archives of the treasury, in the temple of Saturn; and for the same purpose he established registers and public records in the provinces. This institution is, as we see, the model of that order which is observed by us in regard to the register of baptisms, and which, in these latter years, has been brought to perfection by a most prudent regulation.

See Hist. Rom. of Rollin. T. I.

Aurelius extended to all senators the obligation which Trajan had imposed upon those who aspired to offices, to have a considerable part of their fortune laid out in lands in Italy; this precaution became more and more necessary, by its facility to convey the rights of citizen to cities and nations, and consequently to open a way into the senate, to a greater number of subjects of foreign extraction; insomuch that it was to be feared Italy, the head and centre of the empire, should become indifferent to the majority of those who composed the first order of the state.

Such were the principal regulations established by the authority of Aurelius; and we ought to remark in them not only the wisdom of the laws themselves, but likewise a prudent attention to make no innovations without necessity, but to improve upon

foundations already laid, and to re-establish an old, rather than to acquire the honour of introducing a new law.

This prince took the assistance of the ablest lawyers in affairs of this kind; amongst these, history mentions Cerbidius Scævola, a famous master of a still more famous scholar, the great Papinian.

After this picture of Aurelius's government, there remains only to add a few words upon his private conduct: it is useless to mention his sobriety, temperance, and freedom from all excess; I shall only observe, that his life was always serious, and ever employed in the duties of a sovereign: he commonly
Capit. 29. ate by himself, and has been reproached for it, but he was determined by two reasons; on one hand, he was desirous of managing his time, and not to waste at long entertainments hours which could be better employed; on the other, he was pleased with leaving his friends at perfect liberty, and not to lay
M. Aurel. l. 1. them under any restraint by obliging them to be always at his table.

I return to the war against the Marcomanni, after, however, giving an account of the death of the philosopher Peregrinus; a singular and unparalleled event, whose death tallies with the times I am writing of.

History of the life and death of Peregrinus. Luc. de morte Pereg. We know most of Peregrinus from a writing composed by Lucian upon his death, of which he was an eye-witness; and, indeed, we stand in great need of it, in order to our forming a just opinion of this false philosopher, who, by a daring hypocrisy, imposed upon men of more than ordinary capacity, so that Aulus Gellius, who was his contemporary, has made honourable mention of him; nevertheless, he was an artful cheat, who, under the cloke of philosophy, then much revered, knew how to conceal the most shocking crimes; and the least of his vices was a silly vanity and extravagant passion for glory, to which he at last sacrificed his life.

Peregrinus,

Peregrinus, born at Parium, a city near Lampsacus on the coast of the Hellespont, spent his youth in a very debauched manner, and, by his bad conduct, was involved in several troublesome affairs, out of which he extricated himself very ill, with great disgrace, and by means of money; these first crimes of his led him to parricide; he thought his father lived too long, and, impatient to enjoy the inheritance, he strangled him; the noise such an abominable action raised among his fellow-citizens obliged him to fly; he wandered up and down different countries, and coming to Palestine, he there embraced Christianity as a resource under his present distress; for I cannot persuade myself he did it in good earnest, or that his profession was sincere; it appears to me much more probable that one loaded with crimes before and after his profession of Christianity only used it as a mask for a time, and that the Christians, a plain people, void of all artifice, with great ingenuity and candour, were imposed upon by this consummate hypocrite.

He so bewitched them that they raised him to the holy ministry, and, becoming a priest, or perhaps a bishop, he was seized on that account, and put in prison, in Trajan's persecution, or more probably Adrian's. Lucian, a declared enemy of the Christians, gives here, contrary to his intention, a glorious testimony of their charity and zeal for those who suffered for the cause of their Divine Master. They revered Peregrinus as a confessor of Jesus Christ, and they left nothing undone for his delivery from bonds: unable to effect this, they procured him every imaginable comfort; every morning were to be seen at the prison-door, says Lucian, old women, widows, and orphans; their magistrates (that is, probably their priests and deacons) bribed the goalers with money, and, going into the prison, passed whole nights with their brother Christian, and brought him something to eat, seasoning their repast

repast with their pious conversations and lectures. It was in Syria that Peregrinus was detained prisoner, and there came from several cities of Asia minor deputations of Christians loaded with alms; for it is incredible, continues Lucian, what ardency and zeal Christians display on these occasions. They have been taught by their master to consider themselves all as brethren; and, detached from all views of the present life, and flattered with the notion of a happy immortality, they are prodigal of their fortunes, which they think should be used in common by all.

Peregrinus was willing to suffer death through vain-glory, if we believe Lucian, and it is not at all impossible, since this same motive hurried him afterwards, as we shall see, into the flames; but God did not suffer a hypocrite to merit, in the eyes of men, the holy crown of martyrdom. The governor of Syria, who was fond of philosophy and letters, thought he should show clemency to a man who passed for a philosopher, or perhaps he despised him too much to think him worthy of being made a public spectacle, even in the way of punishment; he therefore dismissed him, and set him at liberty.

Peregrinus acted some time longer the part of a Christian, which he connected, according to Lucian's report, (which in this particular does not seem to be much credited,) with the equipage of a Cynic, the cloke, the bag, and the staff; but at last being convicted of failing in some Christian observances, that is, being discovered by the Christians to be a cheat who had too long imposed upon them, he was cut off from their society, and of consequence deprived of the relief they had till then so plentifully afforded him.

He found himself in extreme want, because he had given up to his associates his father's inheritance, computed at thirty talents, to silence the clamours which had been raised against him for the parricide

Fourscore and ten thousand livres.

he

he had committed. When he lost the alms of the Christians, he wanted to revoke that donation; but he could not obtain the annulling of a deed so voluntarily made. He determined once more to leave his own country, where he was too well known, and retiring into Egypt, he gave himself up entirely to Cynic impudence, and was the subject of admiration to fools, who took his presumption for liberty, and his boldness for virtue. It is probable he then took the surname of Proteus, with which he was much delighted, and which perfectly suited him, after all the changes and different forms he had appeared in through life.

Confirmed in the practice of Cynic licentiousness, he would display his talents upon the great theatre of the world, and came to Rome; there he railed against all mankind, and particularly the emperor, from whose goodness and gentleness (probably it was Titus Antoninus) he promised himself impunity. He was not mistaken; the emperor despised Peregrinus's insolence, but had some regard for the name of a philosopher, which this wretch appeared to be; however, the prefect of the city, a sensible man, thought it his duty to prevent the consequences of such excesses, which even met with admirers, and drove this dangerous Cynic from Rome. Peregrinus's glory increased upon his disgrace, and his partisans took occasion from thence to boast of him as a generous philosopher, whose freedom had occasioned his banishment.

He went into Greece, where he continued to signalize himself by his audacious blaming of every thing. A person distinguished for learning, and of high rank among the Greeks, (these characters seem to point out Herodes Atticus,) had, at his own expense, brought water into the city of Olympia, which was in want of it. This magnificent and useful expense, which every one highly applauded, was a subject of invective to Peregrinus; he pretended,

tended, that to furnish a city, where all Greece assembled, with so necessary an assistance as that of water, was the way to effeminate the Grecians, whereas they ought to be hardened, by accustoming them to suffer thirst; and, in the mean time, he did not suffer it himself, but drank of that water he thought so pernicious to others. His declamations did not succeed for this time; the people being enraged, he had like to have been stoned, but saved himself in the temple of Jupiter Olympus. He made a recantation at the next Olympic games, and pronounced, in the presence of all the Grecians assembled, a panegyric upon him to whom Greece was indebted for the water brought to Olympia.

This adventure brought a slur upon his glory, which, having no better foundation than ridiculous bravadoes, could not support itself long; he observed with grief, admiration to lessen, and he knew not by what method to recover it, having already used every stratagem his extravagant vanity could suggest. At last he thought of an expedient which had never entered into the mind of man; he solemnly declared, at the celebration of the Olympic games, which were performed the 161st year of Jesus Christ, that at the next Olympiad, in the presence of all Greece, he would throw himself into the middle of the flames of a burning pile of wood. He fixed his time as we see. From one Olympiad to another there was an interval of four years, and in that time an old man, such as he was then, might hope a more agreeable kind of death would prevent the performance of his word. In case he flattered himself with this, he was disappointed. He lived to the Olympic games in the year 165, and he was to perform his promise, for the foolish vanity which had led him to make it, would not suffer him to retract: he comes therefore to the games, and there he prepares a scene, with all the ostentation fit for dazzling the eyes of the vulgar.

We

We learn from Lucian, who was an eye-witness, that a disciple of Peregrinus, called Theagenes, harangued the populace, and made a pompous panegyric upon Proteus, and his resolution to die like Hercules in the flames. He extolled him above Diogenes or Antisthenes, who founded the Cynic sect, and Socrates; he made him equal to Jupiter. "The "two most wonderful masterpieces in the whole "universe," says he, "are Jupiter Olympius and "Proteus; but one is the work of Phidias, and the "other of nature. Alas! this object, so deserving "of our veneration, is going from the habitation "of men to that of the gods, carried in flames as "in a chariot, and leaves us as orphans." Whilst he pronounced these words, he worked himself up into a sweat, wept, and put his hands to his hair as if he was going to tear it, taking care, however, not to pull it too much. The Cynics who attended him put an end to this farce by producing their orator, whom they surrounded, and endeavoured to comfort.

It was not without necessity that Peregrinus set all these wheels agoing. Many people suspected the true motive of this desperate resolution, and charged it to vain-glory; they knew he was far from being brave, and that he had been more than once afraid of death, when not attended with all this apparatus. Lucian reports, that crossing the Ægean sea in the same ship with him, he saw him in a storm forget all his philosophy, and bewail himself with the women. A few days before his death he had a fit of fever, occasioned probably by his intemperance. The physician he sent for found him rolling on the ground, and crying that he could not bear the burning heat which devoured him, and desiring cold water to cool him. After ordering him what he judged proper, the physician told him, that since he so extremely wished to die, it was very lucky to be brought to his grave by a fever,

fever, without having recourse to a burning pile. The difference is great, replies Peregrinus, death in my bed will not be attended with the same glory.

From such particulars we discover the man; and, besides, his whole life was described and painted in such lively colours by one who knew him well, and who, after Theagenes had ended his discourse, hastily rose up, and, without allowing time for the auditory to depart, drew a picture of Peregrinus, which was not likely to gain him admiration. Indeed, many of those who were present were persuaded that this false philosopher justly desired to perish by the flames, which is the punishment due to the impious and to parricides.

Meantime Peregrinus was not in the least disconcerted; and, building upon the weakness of the people, he flattered himself that his extraordinary death would procure him that applause which he proposed as his recompence; besides, it was not in his power to unsay it; and the Cynics, who, without making the same sacrifice, pretended to share in his glory, pushed him on, and would not have suffered him to recant.

He therefore put on a good countenance, and thought of nothing but how to embellish and give lustre to the performance of his promise. He employed the last days of his life in composing, for all the chief cities of the universe, lessons, and a kind of political and moral testaments, which he sent by some of his disciples, whom he made assume the character of couriers from the kingdom of the dead.

When the fatal day was near, he appeared in the midst of the assembly at Olympia, and in a speech set forth the motives of the resolution he had taken. After setting himself off to advantage, and boasting of the dangers he had gone through, and the pains he had taken for the advancement of philosophy, he concluded by saying, that he would crown

crown a golden life with a becoming end, and that, after living like Hercules, he would die like Hercules, and, like him, lose himself in air. "I propose," added he, "to teach men by my example how they ought "to despise death; so, whereas Hercules had no "other witness of his death but Philoctetes alone, "all the world may be spectators of mine."

Lucian conjectures, with great probability, that Peregrinus's scheme was to gain the glory of a voluntary death without carrying it into execution; he hoped that an admiration of his constancy would engage all his hearers to oppose his design. There were, indeed, some dupes who, with tears, cried out to him, "Preserve yourself for the good of "Greece;" but others of more resolution, and not so easily dazzled, cried out very differently, "Let "him execute what he has promised." Peregrinus was under great consternation; his countenance, which was pale before, grew still paler; his whole body was in a palpitation, and, not being able to finish his speech, he retired. A vast multitude attended him—an agreeable sight to his vanity! He recovered his spirits and assurance, and beheld with pleasure the numbers which followed him, never reflecting that criminals dragged to punishment are still better accompanied.

At last the celebration of the games being over, Peregrinus proclaimed the finishing of his work the night following. The funeral-pile had been prepared beforehand, and in a ditch of six feet deep had been laid a pile of the driest and most combustible wood, with bushes and vine-branches around it. Peregrinus waited till the moon was risen before he appeared, for he would have this luminary enlighten so fine a show, and be a witness of it. He then advanced, escorted by his faithful Cynics, with a flambeau in his hand, and all his retinue: when he came near the pile, Peregrinus stopped, and his companions set fire to it on every side; the flames immediately

mediately rising, Peregrinus parted with his cloke, his bag, and his staff, the rival of Hercules's club, and appeared in a very dirty shirt; he took incense from one of his servants, and, turning to the south, (for that circumstance was a part of the ceremony,) he threw the incense upon the fire. At length he spoke these few words: "Genii of my father and "mother, receive me favourably." People were surprised at his invoking his father's genius, whom he had deprived of life. Perhaps his intention was to protest against the reports which had been spread on that account so much to his disgrace; however, after that short invocation, he leaped into the middle of the flames, and immediately vanished. Lucian, who was present, found in this tragi-comic scene excellent matter for exercising his witty talent, and, by his severe speeches, he so provoked the Cynics, that he saw them ready to strike him with their staves. He retired, and in his way met with a great number of curious people, who came too late, the affair being over. Wearied with their queries, he revenged himself by embellishing his recital with wonders of his own invention, and making a vulture rise out of the flames. People heard him greedily, and he had the pleasure to see his lie succeed. At some distance he found an old man with a venerable beard, who, with the tone of an enthusiast, was recounting to a crowd that he saw a vulture fly out of the pile, and rise into the air.

Such was the end of mad Peregrinus*, a man, says Lucian, who never proposed truth for his end, who had always accommodated his words and actions to the acquiring of vain-glory, and the applauses

* Ἀνδρὸς . . . πρὸς ἀληθείαν μὲν οὐδεπώποτε ἀποβλέψαντος, ἐπὶ δόξῃ δὲ καὶ τῷ παρὰ τῶν πολλῶν ἐπαίνῳ, ἅπαντα ἐπόντος ἀεὶ καὶ πράξαντος, ὡς καὶ ἐς πῦρ ἁλεῖσθαι, ἵνα μηδ' ἀπολαύσειαν τῶν ἐπαινῶν ἔμελλεν, ἀναιθητος αὐτῶν γενόμενος.

plauses of the populace; possessed with this blind madness to such a degree as to throw himself into the flames to procure a reputation, the enjoyment whereof he destroyed by the very action of which that reputation was to be the reward.

SECT. II.

A general idea of the war with the Marcomanni. Three periods in this war. It was preceded by that with the Catti. Beginning of the Marcomanni war. Preparations of Aurelius. The two emperors set out together for the war. Account of what they did. Death of Lucius Verus. Suspicions in regard to it against Aurelius refuted. Apotheosis of L. Verus. Want of openness in M. Aurelius's behaviour. He uses it very properly to the sisters and aunts of Verus. He marries his daughter again to Pompeianus. A great victory over the Marcomanni. Aurelius returns into Pannonia, and pushes the war with vigour for five years. Battle against the Jazyges upon the frozen Danube. Victory over the Quadi, owing to the assistance of Heaven, obtained by the prayers of Christians. Aurelius's clemency to Ariogeses king of the Quadi. He grants peace to the nations he had conquered. Above a hundred thousand prisoners restored to the Romans. Colonies of barbarians received into the dominions of the empire. Officers who distinguished themselves in that war. Rufus Baseus, Pompeianus, Pertinax. The illustrious dead honoured with statues. Aurelius is prevented from pushing the war against the barbarians by the revolt of Avidius Cassius. Character of this rebel. He causes himself to be proclaimed emperor. Aurelius hears, in Pannonia, of the revolt of Cassius. Cassius is slain, at the end of three months, by two officers of the army. Aure-

lius's clemency to the family and accomplices of Cassius. No Christian took part in the revolt of Cassius.

General idea of the war with the Marcomanni. Dio. & Capit. M. Ant. 13, 14, &c.

THE war with the Marcomanni, which I am now to give an account of, is so called, not that the Marcomanni alone undertook and supported it against the Romans, but because they are the most famous of the nations who engaged in it. In the mutilated accounts which we have of this war, mention is made of the Jazyges*, the Quadi, and many other German nations, whose names are to be found in Capitolinus and Dion, and who, sometimes allied together, and sometimes enemies, frequently joined their force against the Romans; and, upon other occasions, with rancour made bloody wars upon each other. Such a complication of facts and interests is a perfect chaos from its obscurity, and the brevity of what records remain. I will not, therefore, undertake to give a connected history, but only a general idea, with some of the most important circumstances.

This war employed Aurelius almost all his reign, allowing him only some short intervals of rest, because the barbarians he had to do with, being restless in their nature, and incapable either of patience under their misfortunes, or of remaining quiet but when necessity obliged them, were always ready to desire peace when they perceived themselves hard pressed, and ready to take up arms when the danger was over.

Three periods in this war.

In the war with the Marcomanni, I distinguish three periods, one of which leads us as far as the death of Verus, the other to the rebellion of Cassius in Syria, and the third ends with the life and reign of Aurelius.

The

* The Marcommanni inhabited Bohemia; the Jazyges here mentioned, the borders of the Teisse; the Quadi, Moravia.

The war with the Catti, which I have already mentioned, was a kind of prelude to this of the Marcomanni. The Catti penetrated into Rhetia, and threatened Italy with an irruption, but were repulsed and overcome. Didius Julianus, who was afterwards emperor, completed their subjection; and from that time there is nothing more said of the Catti in history. Their name is lost in that of the Franks, making a part of their confederacy.

It was preceded by that of the Catti. Capit. 8. Spart. Did. Jul. 1.

The commotions of the Marcomanni immediately followed the war with the Catti, and began at the time when the principal force of the Romans was employed against the Parthians in the East. The Marcomanni, powerful in themselves, were supported by the Victovales, and, as I have said before, by sundry other nations, who, being driven from their own countries by more northern nations, were become fugitives and vagabonds, and sought for a settlement in the dominions of the empire. It was upon the banks of the Danube and in Hungary that they made their efforts. M. Aurelius very reasonably judged he ought to avoid having two great wars upon his hands at once. He amused the Marcomanni, and, by wisely temporizing, put a stop to their motions till he had concluded a peace with the Parthians; but, on the other hand, these delays gave the barbarians time to increase their force; and after the triumph over the Parthians, when M. Aurelius found himself at liberty to act against the Germans, the war was become very considerable, and sufficient to raise a dread of the fate of the empire; and so much the more, as it happened at the same time with the devastations made by the plague, which carried off an infinite number of citizens and soldiers.

Beginning of the war with the Marcomanni. Capit. M. Ant. 13. and 14.

Recourse must now be had to extraordinary remedies in a war which appeared as important as that with Hannibal; they imitated what was practised after the battle of Cannæ; slaves who offered themselves,

Preparations of M. Aurelius. Capit. 21.

selves, were armed and called volunteers, from enlisting of their own accord, whereas soldiers that were free were obliged to serve by the law of the state. They resolved to employ gladiators, with whom Rome and Italy were crowded, and bodies of light troops were formed. In Dalmatia and Dardania they collected robbers, who were accustomed to hunting and attacks by surprise, and regimented them. At length they purchased auxiliary troops of the Germans to fight against German nations.

To these precautions of human prudence Aurelius joined the care of rendering the gods propitious by all sorts of religious ceremonies. He sent for priests and sacrificers from all parts; he offered up a vast number of victims; and, for the expiation of Rome, he used all sorts of purifications and lustrations. He filled the city with foreign rites, contrary to the old maxims of Roman policy. His philospohy, more discreet than Adrian's, had guarded him against magic, and all the operations for the invocation of demons; but, except this, it had left him involved in all the superstitions of an idolatrous worship.

The two emperors depart together to the war. Capit. Ver. 9.

Every thing being prepared, he declared in the senate, that it was necessary both the emperors should command the armies in person. He had not been so well satisfied with Verus's conduct in the war against the Parthians to send him alone in this against the Marcomanni; and he was still more unwilling to leave him at Rome, whilst he himself was absent. He not only was afraid lest Verus should, without reserve, give himself up entirely to pleasure and debauch, but that he might cabal against him; for he mistrusted him, and perhaps not without reason, though he affected to conceal his suspicions, and to preserve all the appearance of a perfect union with his brother.

The two emperors departed from Rome the same year they had triumphed over the Parthians, that

is,

is, in the year of Jesus Christ 166, and passed the winter in Aquileia, in order to begin the campaign early the next year. It appears that they actually went into Pannonia the year of Jesus Christ 167, but we can give no account of what they did there, so lame and imperfect are our memoirs, without order or dates, and full of obscurities and transpositions of facts; all that we think can be affirmed with certainty is, that from 166 to 169 there were a great many battles, in one of which Furius Victorinus, the pretorian prefect, was overcome and slain, but in most of which the Romans had the advantage; that there were still more negotiations, because the barbarians, being alarmed upon every misfortune, were desirous of entering into treaty, but treacherously and with fraudulent intentions; that Aurelius notwithstanding listened to their proposals, wearied perhaps with the disgust which L. Verus occasioned him, who, with an ill grace and a visible aversion, accompanied him, and who, being quite sick of the war, and continually regretting the pleasures of Rome, thought any reason sufficient for returning home. The greatest advantage from this expedition of Aurelius was, that the frontiers of Italy and Illyria were better fortified than before, and secured from the incursions of the barbarians.

A. R. 917. Capit. M. Ant. 14. A. R. 918.

Affairs being in this situation, L. Verus was positively determined to return from Aquileia to Rome, and his brother was forced to consent to it; but a sudden and unforeseen death delivered Aurelius from a colleague who was so great a burden to him. Whilst they were on their journey, and in the same vehicle, Verus was seized with a violent apoplexy; he was bled immediately, and carried to Altinum, which was not far off; he lived only three days, and then died, without having recovered his speech, aged thirty-nine years, nine of which he had reigned with Aurelius.

Death of L. Verus. A. R. 920.

Suspicions on that account against M. Aurelius refuted. Capit. M. Ant. 14. & 15. & Ver. 9. and 10.

Calumny pays so little regard even to virtuous princes, that there were people who durst accuse M. Aurelius of his brother's death, either by poison, or by having him blooded improperly upon the accident which befel him; others ascribed his death to Faustina, who, having had a criminal complaisance for her son-in-law, and knowing he had revealed the horrible secret, revenged herself by poison. According to a third account, Faustina had another motive; Verus, it is said, was more familiar with Fabia, her sister, than was suitable for a brother, and they together formed a scheme for destroying Aurelius. This black plot came to Faustina's knowledge, who prevented it by being beforehand with Verus.

The variety of these reports is sufficient of itself to take away all belief of them; besides, the madness of people in this respect is well known, who will never have princes die a natural death like others. But it would be not only the highest injustice, but even madness, to charge Aurelius with such a crime; and it would be sacrilege, according to the expression of his historian, to affront his virtue with such a suspicion *.

Undoubtedly he did not love Verus, and it was impossible he could. Besides the absolute contrariety of their dispositions and manners, Capitolinus furnishes us with a particular fact which must greatly provoke Aurelius: Annius Libo, his relation, serving in Syria as lieutenant-general under Verus, was wanting in deference to that prince, and, instead of taking his orders, he declared, whatever doubtful cases might happen, he would write to Rome. He died suddenly, and there appeared marks of poison all over his body, so that the world believed that Verus was the author of his death. Aurelius, if we take it from Capitolinus, did not believe

* Hoc nefas est de Marco putari. *Capit. Ver.* 11.

believe his brother guilty, and, indeed, he showed him no marks of his displeasure. He even permitted Verus to marry Libo's widow to Agaclytus, one of his freedmen, and he carried his complaisance so far as to be present at the nuptials; but all that is to be concluded from thence is, Aurelius's great patience; and it by no means follows that he was convinced of Verus's innocence. If we add the suspicions and uneasinesses from the designs that were laid against himself, it will be easy to believe that Aurelius was not greatly afflicted at his brother's death; but malice itself can never believe he had any hand in it. Dio. p. 802.

What we have to blame in him is, the too great honours he paid to the memory of a prince so little deserving his regard. I speak not of the magnificent obsequies which he celebrated, and of the pomp with which he caused his body to be carried to Adrian's mausoleum; but he ranked a man among the gods, who, as I have already said, was in cruelty almost a second Nero. He appointed him a worship and sacrifices, with a priest, and a college of worshippers consecrated to his name; an impiety as foolish and ridiculous in the eyes of men, as injurious to the majesty of the one true God. Apotheosis of L. Verus.

Aurelius has used the same affectation in the work he has left us. Whilst he was writing for posterity, he was not ashamed to thank the gods for giving him a brother, who indeed, by his manners, became to him a spur to vigilance and attention, but by whom he had had the agreeable consolation of seeing himself beloved and cherished. Want of openness in M. Aurelius's conduct. M. Aurel. l. 1.

He spoke more openly in the senate; when he thanked that body for decreeing divine honours to Verus, he declared, that in some degree he dated from that day the beginning of his government, having no longer a colleague whose carelessness hurt the public affairs: he even insinuated that the republic was indebted to his councils, and not to any Capitol. M. Anton. 20.

care of Verus, for the happy success in the war against the Parthians. In a word, the tendency of his whole speech, and the impression it made on the senators, were, that Verus's death had delivered him from a burden very difficult and grievous for him to bear.

This whole conduct of his was wrong, and Verus, so inferior to Aurelius in every thing else, in the point of openness had the preference; for Verus, vicious as he was, yet was plain in his manners, and an enemy to all hypocrisy and dissimulation.

Capit. Ver. 1.

He behaves very well to the sisters and aunts of Verus. Capit. M. Ant. 20. and Ver. 9.

It is with regret, and from the obligation I am under to follow the law of history, that I observe these blemishes in Aurelius's life, and am much better pleased in relating the benevolence he showed to his brother's sisters and aunts; he made them enjoy all the honours due to their rank, and he assigned them pensions to enable them to support it with splendour: he is likewise deserving of praise for his behaviour to Verus's freedman, who had gained too great an ascendant over that prince, and made an ill use of it. Aurelius dismissed them all, and only kept Eclectus in the palace, who was no better than the rest, but whom Providence appointed to deliver the world from the fury of Commodus.

He marries his daughter again to Pompeianus.

It does not appear that Verus had any children by his wife Lucilla, the daughter of Aurelius. She was married again by her father to Pompeianus, a man of merit, but of a very unsuitable age for the spouse they gave him, and who besides, being the son only of a knight of Antioch, did not seem born to be the husband of an emperor's daughter. So this marriage was neither to the princess's taste nor her mother's, but Aurelius sacrificed all to virtue.

Great victory over the Marcomanni.

Whilst he was employed in these different cares at Rome, he did not lose sight of the war against the Marcomanni, who, on their part, did not suffer themselves to be forgotten; for it is probable, at this time, we ought to date the victory they obtained

over

over Vindex, the pretorian prefect, and which appears to be the same in which Lucian says there were twenty thousand Romans killed. The conquerors, improving their victory, advanced towards Italy, and, penetrating as far as Aquilea, were very near taking it. Perhaps it was upon this occasion that Aurelius made the great and unusual preparations which I mentioned in the beginning of the war. None of these facts have dates in the originals. This only is certain, that Aurelius pushed that war with a vigour and steadiness very different from what he could have done whilst Verus was alive.

M. Aurelius returns into Pannonia, and pushes the war with vigour for five years. Dio. and Capit. M. Aut. 17, 21, 22. Lucian, Pseudom.

He went from Rome to Pannonia the year after his colleague's death, and remained five years in that country, undergoing incredible fatigue with a fortitude which made up for his weakness of body and bad state of health, and laying others, by his example, under a necessity of bearing hardships and troubles which frequently occasioned the severe maxims of philosophy to be complained of. He had great success, he had likewise some losses; but the former encouraged him, whilst the latter served only to determine him to repair them. He would not hear the representations of his friends, who wanted to persuade him to leave a war attended with so much fatigue and danger. His scheme was, not to return to Rome till he had brought the barbarians under entire subjection. A. R. 921.

I ought here to relate a great many warlike exploits, but I find only two with any particular circumstances.

The first is a battle against the Jazyges upon the frozen Danube. These people, being overcome not far from the river, fled, and imagined themselves safe when they got upon the ice. The Romans, however, pursuing them, they made a bold stand, thinking they had a great advantage in such a field of battle; for their horses were accustomed to run

Battle against the Jazyges upon the Danube when frozen.

upon

upon the ice as upon land, whereas the Romans were apt to slide, and could hardly stand. The event showed the Jazyges their mistake, and that valour and presence of mind, with well-disciplined troops, can get the better of all difficulties. The Romans attacked in front and flank, drew themselves up so as to face them on every side; that they might stand firm, they threw down their bucklers; and stood upon them; in this situation they received the enemy, and fought against them body to body, as in a kind of wrestling. They brought down both men and horse, and if the barbarians had time to get up again, the Romans seized them, and the two combatants, each of them sliding, could not well prevent falling; but, whatever way they fell, the Roman failed not to have the superiority: even when he fell upon his back, and had his enemy upon him, with a stroke of his foot he kicked him off, and, with great agility and vigour recovering his feet, fell upon the barbarian, and mastered him. The Jazyges, who were strangers to this manner of fighting, and whose whole force, as has been before observed, consisted in their horse, were entirely disconcerted; they lost all courage, and suffered themselves to be slain almost without any resistance, insomuch that of their vast numbers very few were saved.

The consequence of this and many other victories of the Romans over the Marcomanni and the Jazyges was their subjection, and Aurelius, the conqueror, took the name of Germanicus.

Victory over the Quadi owing to Heaven, by the prayers of Christians.

The second action I have to relate was in the country of the Quadi, and it is of very different importance, whether it be considered in itself, or with regard to the honour of our religion; I mean the miraculous rain which was obtained by the prayers of the Christians, and saved the emperor and his army from very great danger. Dion thus recounts this event.

Aurelius

Aurelius* obtained over the Quadi a victory attended with miraculous circumstances, or rather it was given him by God; for the Romans were in extreme danger, and the Deity rescued them in a most astonishing manner. The Quadi had surrounded them in a place where they had every advantage; meantime the Romans, having made a tortoise with their bucklers, prepared to receive them; but the barbarians resolved to conquer without drawing a sword, hoping to destroy all their enemies by cold and thirst; and, as they had greatly the advantage in numbers, they so shut up the Romans, that they had no way of getting water. It was after a battle that the Romans were in this disagreeable situation, so that fatigue, wounds, scorching heat, thirst, all conspired to their destruction; and they had not even the comfort of dying like brave men, with sword in hand, because the barbarians, being posted in inaccessible places, remained quiet, and would not fight. All on a sudden, the clouds gathered and thickened, and there fell, not without the particular protection of God, a plentiful shower. This blessing from Heaven saved the lives of the Romans. At first they raised up their heads and faces to receive the water with their mouths; then they took their helmets to catch the rain, and, when they had filled them, they drank greedily, and gave some to their horses. The barbarians thought this a favourable opportunity for attacking them, and, whilst they saw them busy in quenching the thirst they had so long endured, they prepared to fall upon them. But Heaven, being armed against the enemies of Rome, darts upon the Quadi large hailstones and thunderbolts, which dissipate and burn them, Dio. p. 802.

* Νίκη παράδοξος εὐτυχήθη, μᾶλλον δ' παρὰ Θεᾶ εδωρήθη· κινδυνεύσαντας γὰρ ἐν τῇ μαχῃ τοὺς Ρωμαίους παραδοξότατα τὸ Θεῖον ἔσωσε.

them, whilst Aurelius's troops were watered with a refreshing shower. This double prodigy rendered the Romans conquerors. The barbarians threw away their arms, and came to seek an asylum among their enemies to shelter themselves from the thunderbolts, which crushed them to pieces. Aurelius agreed to it, gave the Quadi their lives, and was proclaimed by the soldiers Imperator, or victorious general, for the seventh time.

Claud. de VI. Cons. Honorii, v. 340.

A Pagan poet has likewise born testimony to this miracle. Claudian, speaking of Aurelius's victory over the Quadi, says, "* That the honour of it is "not to be ascribed to the generals; for," adds he, "a shower of fire fell from heaven upon the enemy. "The horse, surrounded with flames, prances, and "throws off his trembling rider; the soldier per- "ceives his helmet to melt, and sees his pike and "sword turn fluid, and run into rivulets of metal." In this battle Heaven was the sole actor, and human weapons had nothing to do.

Nardini Roma Vetus, VI. 9.

Antoninus's pillar, a contemporary monument, which remains to this day in Rome, also attests the prodigy we speak of. It is there represented in bas-relief, with other exploits of Aurelius against the Germans.

The fact ought, therefore, to be considered as certain; it only remains to assign the cause. Dion has recourse to magical operation: he tells us, that one Arnuphis, an Egyptian skilled in magic, invoked ethereal Mercury, and obtained from him the wished-for rain. It is needless to refute so trifling and absurd an opinion, and Aurelius informs us himself

M. Aurel. l. 1.

that

* Laus ibi nulla ducum. Nam flammeus imber in hostem
Decidit; hunc dorso trepidum flammante ferebat
Ambustus sonipes; hic tabescente solutus
Subsidit galeâ, liquefactaque fulgure cuspis
Canduit, et subitis fluxere vaporibus enses,
Tut contenta polo mortalis nescia teli
Pugna fuit.

that he had no faith in magic. Capitolinus* and Claudian ascribe the honour of the miracle to the emperor's virtue, which deserved this distinguishing favour of Heaven. Neither religion nor truth, it is plain, will suffer us to adopt this way of accounting for it; the Christians alone have given us the cause we seek for. Capit. M. Ant. c. 24.

We learn from Eusebius, that in the Roman army there was the Miletum legion, which consisted of Christians; that these pious soldiers, in so great a distress, falling on their knees, offered up their prayers and vows to the living and true God, who sent that miraculous storm so salutary to the Romans, and so fatal to their enemies. S. Apollinarius of Hierapolis, who lived at the same time, gave his testimony to the fact. Tertullian quotes a letter of the emperor, who, in his account to the senate of the miracle that had happened, acknowledged it to be owing to the prayers of the Christian soldiers. It were to be wished that this letter had been preserved to us; but, though it be lost, it is nevertheless certain, that an event universally acknowledged to be miraculous could have no other author or cause than God alone, moved by the piety of his faithful worshippers. †The date of this miracle, so glorious to the Christians, is placed by Tillemont in the year of Jesus Christ 174. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. V. c. 5. Tertull. Apologet. c. 7. A. R. 925.

I know not whether it was not upon this occasion that Ariogeses king of the Quadi was taken by the Romans; but I must not omit that this barbarous Clemency of M. Aurelius to Ariogeses king of the Quadi. Dio. p. 808. and ap. Val.

* Fulmen de cœlo precibus suis contra hostium machinamentum extorsit, suis pluviâ impetratâ quum siti laborarent. *Capit.*

. . . . . omne Tonantis
Obsequium Marci mores potuere mereri. *Claudian.*

† There remain some small difficulties as to certain circumstances of little consequence. One may consult Tillemont, the notes of Scaliger upon Eusebius's Chronicle, and those of M. de Valois upon the Ecclesiastical History of the same author.

barous prince is a shining proof of Aurelius's clemency. The Quadi had established him their king without the emperor's consent, nay even against his inclination; which so provoked him, that he put a price upon his head, promising five hundred pieces of gold to whoever should kill him, and a thousand to him who should bring him alive. Ariogeses was made prisoner, and Aurelius was satisfied with banishing him to Alexandria.

He grants peace to the nations he had conquered. Dio. p. 807. and seq.

Aurelius's victories forced the different nations of Germany with whom he made war to sue for peace, not all at once, but sometimes one, sometimes another, according to their different interests and circumstances. It would be to no purpose, and perhaps tedious, to give here the imperfect accounts which we have on this subject from the lame and confused extracts of Dion. What I think most deserving of notice is what follows.

Above 100,000 prisoners delivered to the Romans

I first observe, that the Romans must necessarily have suffered great losses in these German wars, since there is mention made of more than a hundred thousand prisoners delivered up to them in consequence of the treaties of peace.

Colonies of barbarians received into the dominions of the empire.

In the second place, it is of use to observe, for the sequel, that Aurelius was very ready to grant settlements in the dominions of the empire to the vanquished barbarians, who likewise by that means obtained of him, at least in part, what was the ground of the war. He received colonies into Dacia, Pannonia, the two Germanies upon the Rhine, and even into Italy and Ravenna; but those he had established at Ravenna having laid a plot for making themselves masters of the city, he perceived the danger of placing too much confidence in these violent guests, who were always fond of handling their arms. He drove them out of Italy, and would not admit any more colonies of barbarians.

Among the generals who distinguished themselves under the command of Aurelius, in this war with the

the Marcomanni, history names Rufus Basæus, who had risen from the lowest military rank to that of pretorian prefect: he was born a poor peasant, and retained all his life the rusticity of his first state, expressing himself so very ill that with difficulty he was understood; he, however, became a great officer, and is a proof that nature alone, when she acts with force and vigour, is sufficient of herself, without the help of education, to form men of merit.

Roman officers, who distinguished themselves in this war.
Rufus Basæus.
Dio. p. 803. and ap. Val.

Pompeianus, son-in-law to the emperor, acquired likewise great glory in the several important commands he held in this war; but what does him still more honour than his exploits, the particulars of which we are unacquainted with, is, the justice he showed to oppressed merit in the person of Pertinax, and the care he took to make him known, and procure him employment.

Pompeianus.
Dio. p. 802, and 833.

Pertinax, who was emperor after Commodus, was not born for so high a station—the son of a freedman, of a mechanical profession, in the little city of Alba Pompeia in Liguria, and who gave him a good education, as the best part of his fortune. At first he kept a school, and taught grammar. So confined a business not suiting his ambition, he betook himself to arms, and obtained a company through the interest of Lollianus Avitus, a consular person, and his father's patron. He served in Syria in the reign of Titus Antoninus, and in the war against the Parthians, under the command of L. Verus, and acquired the character of a brave and able officer. He rose by degrees, always showing himself superior to the post he was in; and he was become governor of Dacia, when a court intrigue was formed against him. Aurelius, sensible as he was, suffered himself, however, to be prejudiced by envious and malicious reports, and recalled Pertinax. Pompeianus had the courage to declare for a man disgraced by the emperor, his father-in-law; and he gave

Pertinax.
Dio. p. 831. et Capit. Pertin. 1. and 2.
Alba in Montserrat.

gave Pertinax a commission in the troops under his command. He behaved with his usual vigour and activity, and signalized himself. Then the plot formed against him was fully discovered: Aurelius was not ashamed to own that he had been unjust to a man of worth, and, to repay the injury, he loaded Pertinax with favours: he admitted him into the senate, ranked him with the ancient pretors, and intrusted him with the command of a legion. He had no reason to repent of what he did, as he found him of great service in the German war, for which he
Dio. p. 800. rewarded him with the consulship. This high promotion provoked envy again: a great many looked upon the honour of the consulate as lessened and sullied by his obscure birth. Aurelius openly defend-
Capit. ed his choice. In a speech seen and quoted by Capitolinus, the emperor praised Pertinax greatly, and recounted every thing which that illustrious warrior had done and suffered; and on many other occasions he loaded him with commendations, sometimes before the soldiers, and sometimes to the senate, showing at the same time his concern at not being able, on account of his rank as senator, to make him pretorian prefect; for this office, of which the power was then very great, and which was the most important to the state, could not regularly be held but by a Roman knight.

The illustrious dead honoured with statues. Capit. M. Ant. 22.

Aurelius, who was pleased with doing honour to virtue, because he had a large share of it himself, erected statues in Trajan's forum to all the illustrious persons who had lost their lives in the Marcomannian war.

M. Aurelius is prevented pushing the war against the barbarians, by the revolt of Avidius Cassius. Id. Ibid. 17. and 24.

The fruits of this war, and of the victories he had gained, were the deliverance of Pannonia, which had been invaded by the barbarians, and the security of the frontier provinces. He wished to conquer Marcomania and Sarmatia; that is, the countries inhabited by the Sarmatian Jazyges. The revolt of Avidius Cassius prevented him from executing his design,

and

and obliged him, at least for a time, to leave the barbarians in peace.

I have already had occasion to speak of Avidius Cassius, who had a greater share than any other Roman general in the success of the Parthian war. This is the place for describing him more particularly. Character of this rebel. Dio. l. LXXI. Capit. M. Ant. 24. 25. & Vulcat. Gall. Avid. Cass.

We can affirm nothing certain as to his origin. Dion makes him a Syrian by birth, a native of the city of Cyr, and a son of Heliodorus the rhetorician, who is undoubtedly the same I have mentioned in the reign of Adrian, and who having gained great credit with that emperor, became prefect of Egypt. Vulcatius Gallicanus, whose text is very confused, and perhaps interpolated, seems to make Avidius Severus his father, who from a centurion rose to the most eminent dignities, was a man of merit, and much regarded by Aurelius. This is certain, that the name of Cassius, which he bore, should not deceive us, and make us consider him for a descendant of those ancient Cassii, famous in the times of the republic, and in particular of the celebrated murderer of Cæsar; but he had all their haughtiness, insolence, and antipathy against monarchical government. What made these qualities in him the more dangerous was, that they were supported with great skill in the art of war, and with talents to make him feared and obeyed by the soldiers.

A rigid disciplinarian, he introduced the ancient severity into the armies under his command. He banished entirely every appearance of luxury and effeminacy; and would not suffer the soldiers to carry other provisions, in time of war, than bacon, biscuit, and vinegar, which, mixed with water, served for drink. Aurelius, who knew his disposition, gave him the legions of Syria to reform, of which he wrote as follows to the intendant of that army: "I have intrusted to Avidius Cassius the "legions of Syria who were drowned in pleasure,

" who every day use the hot bath; and, in a word, " who live after the fashion of Antioch, and not " agreeably to the rules of Roman discipline. You " would approve of my choice, if you was ac- " quainted with Cassius, who, in our days, renews " the severity of those whose name he bears; for " there is no governing the troops but by the an- " cient discipline. You know this verse of Ennius, " which is in the mouth of every body: " *It is by* " *ancient manners, and by men who preserve the an-* " *cient spirit, that the Roman republic subsists* *." " As for you, take care only to furnish the legions " with plenty of provisions. Avidius, if I have " formed a just notion of him, will give a good ac- " count of them." Vulcatius has given us the intendant's answer, which contains nothing remarkable, but concludes with a judicious reflection †: " As to the provisions necessary for the army," says the intendant, " I have taken care they shall be " ready; the thing is not difficult under a good " general, for then both the wants and the ex- " penses are much less."

Avidius did not disappoint Aurelius in the hopes he had conceived of him. Immediately he ordered all absentees to repair to their stations, and posted up an order for cashiering with disgrace every officer or soldier who should be found at Daphne ‡. He cleared the camp of every thing which could allay their courage, and declared to the legions, when assembled, that he would make them pass the winter in tents, if they did not mend their behaviour. This was not a fruitless threat; the troops knew it well, and prevented its execution by their reformation. He was careful to keep them always in

* Moribus antiquis stat res Romana virisque.

† Annona omnis parata est: neque quidquam deest sub bono duce: non enim multum aut quæritur aut impenditur. *Vulcat. Avid.* 5.

‡ A place of pleasure and debauch near Antioch.

in breath; every seventh day he obliged them to go through their exercise, and he himself viewed their arms, clothing, shoes, and stockings. This army, thus prepared, was victorious over the Parthians, and did great exploits in Armenia and Arabia, which procured the Romans a glorious peace.

Avidius's severity would have been highly commendable, had he not carried it to cruelty; but one cannot help shuddering at hearing his rigours to the poor soldiers: whoever robbed a peasant was crucified on the place where the crime was committed; the number of the criminals was no stop to his inflexible rigour, and he would often throw ten at a time into the river or the sea, chained together: he even contrived a new and unheard-of punishment; a mast of great height was fixed on the ground, and, from top to bottom, he caused those who were condemned to death to be fixed to it; at the foot of the mast a fire was kindled, which burnt those who were nearest, and choked the rest with the smoke, or killed them with fear. This same general punished deserters by cutting off their hands or legs; and it was not from a sentiment of pity that he suffered them to live, but because he thought death annihilated the example, whereas it subsisted in a living criminal.

He was unacquainted, as we see, with that moderation which is necessary to prevent what is good in itself becoming vicious through excess. He was employed in the war against the Sarmatian Jazyges; and whilst he commanded the Roman army, a body of auxiliary troops, led by their centurions, without waiting for the general's orders, attacked near the Danube three thousand of their enemies who were off their guard, and, after cutting them to pieces, returned to the camp with great booty. The centurions expected to be well rewarded for a brave action crowned with success, and in which they had made up for the negligence of their superior officers,

who suffered so fair an opportunity to escape them. Cassius judged quite otherwise; he considered them as rash who had exposed themselves to fall into an ambuscade, of which there were many examples; as infringers of discipline, who had acted of their own head against all military law, and consequently he did not think sufficient to condemn them to death, without adding to it the greatest ignominy, and the servile punishment of the cross. Such a severity, which had neither been seen nor heard of before, excited the indignation of the whole army: clamours are raised, and sedition begins to stir; Avidius, who actually did some of the exercises practised among the Romans, came almost naked, and showing himself to the seditious, with an undaunted air, "*Strike, kill me," says he; "to the "breach of discipline, add the murder of your ge- "neral." The soldiers feared him, because he was not afraid of them, and all was calm. The historian adds, that this act of unheard-of severity carried discipline in the Roman camp to the greatest height, and besides intimidated the barbarians, who sued to the emperor for peace. The effect is good; the cause which produced it will not, I believe, merit the approbation of any candid and moderate judge. Avidius pretended to imitate Marius, one of whose commendable qualities was his severity in maintaining of discipline; but he exceeded his model.

What must appear singular is, that the same person, rigid in certain cases to cruelty, showed himself in others indulgent to excess: he was, upon the whole, a variable character, undetermined, and without principles. He sometimes showed great regard for religion, and at others was profane, and

* Percutite me, si audetis; et corruptæ disciplinæ facinus addite. Tunc conquiescentibus cunctis, meruit timeri quia non timuit. *Id. ibid.* 4.

and a despiser of holy things. He was often fond of wine, and of eating, and on other occasions he valued himself in bearing hunger and thirst. To-day a lover of chastity, to-morrow plunged into the most shocking debaucheries. By these contradictory qualities united in him, he seemed to bring Catiline to life, who had joined all the appearances of virtue with every vice. They gave his name to Avidius, who was mad enough to receive and adopt it as a title of honour. He made himself worthy of it by the wicked plan he formed to deprive Aurelius of empire and life. He did not scruple to say, that he should not be a true Catiline till he had killed *the author of Philosophical Dialogues.* He compared, if I mistake not, Aurelius to Cicero, and his designs against a philosophical emperor with Catiline's projects against him, who was the father both of philosophy and eloquence among the Romans.

He nourishes in his heart his ambition to reign.

The design Avidius had formed against Aurelius was not a sudden resolution, but the consequence of a way of thinking he had always entertained in his heart. The antipathy which he affected, as I have said, against monarchy, was no more than an ambition of making himself sovereign; he had only a false zeal for republican liberty, and his real sentiments were for power. It is reported of him, that, when a mere youth, he entertained the audacious and foolish thought of dethroning Titus Antoninus; and that his father, a man of sense, put a stop to the project, and prevented the discovery: but Avidius's unbridled ambition was not cured; he continued to behave just as appears by what L. Verus, when he commanded the East, says of him in a letter to Aurelius.

" Avidius Cassius is very desirous of the empire, " and, I believe, I have proofs of it. He gave just " suspicions against him, under our father Antoni- " nus. I advise you to watch his proceedings; he

" grows popular and powerful. He is displeased " with every thing we do, and turns our taste for " polite literature into ridicule. He treats you as " an old * woman given up to the chimeras of philo- " sophy, and me † as a strange mixture of study and " debauch. See what measures you ought to take. " I hate not Avidius, but I doubt it is neither safe " for you nor your children to put such a man at " the head of the armies, who knows how to make " himself both feared and loved by the soldiers."

Aurelius's answer is very remarkable. With sentiments and thoughts becoming a great prince, he mixes the reasonings of a false philosophy and an expression of gentleness and magnanimity which exceeds all bounds, and of which, therefore, the sincerity becomes doubtful. " I have received," says he, " your letter, filled with jealousies unbecoming " our rank, and such a government as ours. If the " gods destine him to the empire whom you ex- " hort me to guard against, we shall not be able to " prevent it, though we should never so fain; for " you know the saying of our grandfather Adrian, " no man ever killed his successor. If, on the con- " trary, Avidius fights against the decrees of fate, " he himself will meet his destruction, without our " cruelty's bringing the reproach of it upon us. Add " to this, that we cannot judge a person who is not " accused, and who, as you yourself observe, is be- " loved by the soldiers: besides, such is the nature " of crimes of state, that even those who are clearly " convicted are nevertheless considered as oppress- " ed. I will again quote the emperor our grand- " father, who said, that the condition of princes " was much to be pitied, because conspiracies laid " against them were never believed by the public, " unless they perished in them. Domitian said the " same

* Philosopham aniculam. † Luxuriosum morionem.

"same thing, before him; but I chose rather to "quote Adrian to you, because maxims, though "true, lose their weight in the mouth of tyrants. "Let us, therefore, not trouble ourselves with Avi- "dius's conduct and his projects, since in other "respects he is an able and brave general, and ne- "cessary to the republic; for, as to what you say "of putting him to death to secure the lives of my "children, may my children die if Avidius de- "serves to be loved better than they, and if the "good of the commonwealth requires that he "should live rather than the children of Aurelius."

This is what I have called extravagant heroism, which passes all bounds. Besides, Aurelius acted with regard to Avidius as if he had no mistrust of him; he continued to employ him in the war of the East, in Sarmatia, and against the rebels of Egypt, who are called in history Bucoli or shepherds, and who were reduced to obedience by this active and able general. Avidius did not conquer them by force, till he had first artfully raised divisions among them; and so he dispersed a faction which had been powerful enough to endanger even the city of Alexandria.

It was not till after all these exploits, and in the fifteenth year of Aurelius's reign, that Avidius at last executed the project which he had thought of all his life, and caused himself to be proclaimed emperor.

He causes himself to be proclaimed emperor.

It is said that he was encouraged to revolt by Faustina, who, observing Aurelius's health always uncertain, and his son Commodus still very young, and of a disposition which promised but little, was afraid that, if she lost her husband, she and all her family would be destroyed, and for that reason encouraged Avidius's ambition, who engaged to marry her. This detestable suspicion has nothing in it repugnant to Faustina's manners, and her well-known wickedness; but it is perhaps difficult to reconcile

it with some letters, wherein she earnestly presses the emperor her husband to take vengeance, without mercy, upon Avidius's children, and all the accomplices of the rebellion; unless it is said she did this in order to conceal the part she had in it.

However this be, it appears that Avidius made use of the opportunity which Aurelius's sickness gave him of spreading a report of his death, not expecting without this device to be able to withdraw the soldiers and the people from the love of so good a prince. At the same time, undoubtedly in concert with him, a report was spread that the army in Pannonia, where Aurelius was supposed to have died, had chosen Avidius in his room. The legions of Syria which he commanded, prepossessed with these false opinions, proclaimed him emperor, and one of the principal officers clothed him with the ornaments of sovereignty; and, as a recompence, received from him the office of pretorian prefect. Avidius, careful to play his part, affected a great regard for Aurelius, and, supposing him dead, ranked him among the gods. All the East acknowledged the new emperor; Antioch declared for him with great forwardness; Egypt and Alexandria, then under the government of Flavius Calvisius, submitted to his authority; and he sent Mecianus thither to secure the obedience of that great province.

Dio. ap. Val.

Though Avidius showed great regard for Aurelius's personal virtue, he did not forbear, however, in the style of all rebels, to decry the government of a prince, against whom he had taken up arms, and to promise a reformation of all abuses. We may judge of the discourses which he held, by a letter to his son-in-law, where, taking off the mask, and no longer building upon the false report of Aurelius's death, he explains himself thus: "That "the republic is miserable by suffering vultures to "devour it, whom no prey can satisfy. Aurelius

"is

" is undoubtedly a good man; but, to make his " clemency praised, he suffers men whom he knows " deserving of death to live. Where is the an- " cient Cassius, whose name till now I bear in vain? " Where is the severity of Cato the censor? What " is become of the discipline of our ancestors? It " has long been lost; at present it is neither " thought of nor regretted. The emperor professes " the business of a philosopher; he employs him- " self in discussions of what is just and unjust; " upon the nature of the soul; upon clemency; " and takes not to heart the concerns of the re- " public. You see the necessity of making many " examples of severity, and to take off many heads, " in order to establish the government in its an- " cient splendour. What do not these worthless " governors of provinces deserve? Can I consider " those as proconsuls or propretors, who fancy " themselves placed at the head of provinces, by " the senate or by the emperor, for no other purpose " than to live in pleasure, and to get rich? You " know the pretorian prefect of our philosopher; " three days before he was appointed to that office " he had not bread, and now, behold him on a " sudden worth millions. By what way, I pray " you? Is it not at the expense of the goods of " the republic, and the spoils of the provinces? " Let them be rich, I grant it; let them even swim " in opulence; their forfeitures will fill the public " treasury, which is exhausted. May the gods on- " ly be favourable to the honest party! I will act " the true Cassius, and restore to the republic its " ancient authority."

These last words of Cassius's letter were, undoubtedly, a language very different from his true sentiments; but his threatenings to shed a great deal of blood are agreeable to his character; and had his projects succeeded, he probably would have put them in practice.

Aurelius

M. Aurelius in Pannonia hears of the revolt of Cassius.

Aurelius received in Pannonia intelligence of Avidius's revolt. He was informed of it by Martius Verus, governor of Cappadocia, a man of singular merit, and who had distinguished himself in the war against the Parthians. Avidius's reputation was great, and the very thoughts of carrying on war against him at first raised a dread in Aurelius's troops. At Rome the terror was so great, that they imagined they saw him at the gates of the city.

His speech to the soldiers.

Aurelius seeing the confusion spread among the soldiers, assembled them, and made the following speech, which I shall relate after Dion, as being extremely well calculated to make the character of this philosophical prince still better known, and as it furnishes a very singular, perhaps the only, example of moderation in such circumstances: "My brave "companions," says he, "I am not going to deliver "myself over to sentiments of indignation; is it "permitted to a mortal man to be angry with the "decrees of fate, which disposes of every thing "with sovereign power? But my situation entitles "me to complain. Is it not, indeed, a hard case, "not to have one moment to breathe in peace, but "to be hurried continually from one war to an- "other? Is not a civil war an evil I had no reason "to expect? What is still more cruel, is to see "there is no faith among men; to see myself at- "tacked by a friend loaded with favours, and, "without being guilty of any injustice, to be obli- "ged to fight for my throne and my life. After "these sufferings of mine, what virtue can be se- "cure? What friendship can be relied on? Besides, "was I only in danger, I should take it patiently, "knowing I was not born immortal; but this is a "common danger, which concerns the whole em- "pire, and all the citizens; war spares nobody. "There is a very easy way of ending the quarrel, "and I would willingly embrace it were it possible.

"I

" I am very ready, on my part, to propose to Cas-
" sius an interview, and to justify myself in regard
" to him, either before you or the senate, and I
" will resign the government to him without draw-
" ing the sword, if it is deemed for the good of
" the public; for it is for the service of the state
" I endure so much fatigue; that I expose myself
" to so many dangers; that in an advanced age,
" and with tender health, I continue here so many
" years at a distance from Italy, without ever en-
" joying sound sleep, or making a meal without
" being disturbed; but I cannot expect that Cas-
" sius will come to an agreement. How can he
" trust me after his own infidelity? There is a ne-
" cessity to come to arms, and the event is not
" what troubles me. Can you, my companions,
" doubt of victory? The Cilicians, the Syrians,
" the Jews, the Egyptians, have never been able
" to stand before you, nor never will, even though
" they should exceed you in numbers as much as
" they are your inferiors in this respect. With
" such soldiers the greatest general can no more
" conquer than an eagle with a flock of jays, or a
" lion at the head of a herd of timorous deer. I
" know Cassius is a soldier, and that he has acqui-
" red a great name in the Parthian war; but it was
" with you he gained those victories which made
" him so illustrious. Here he will not be seconded;
" and, besides, Martius Verus, who continues faith-
" ful to us, is a general very capable to counter-
" balance him. Perhaps Cassius repents already of
" his rash proceeding, since he knows I am alive;
" for it was only upon the report of my death that
" he dared to revolt; but should he persist, at least
" it is certain that, upon our approach, the dread
" of our valour, and the shame of having injured
" me, cannot fail to confound him, and make him
" abandon all his mad projects. All I fear (I will
" tell you frankly) is, lest despair should cause him

" to

" to kill himself, or that some one, thinking to do " me a service, should hasten his death, and deprive " me of the greatest and most agreeable fruits of " my victory. Yes, the height of my wishes would " be to have it in my power to pardon a man who " has offended me; to be faithful to the faithless; " and to show myself a friend to him who has " broken through all the ties of friendship to me. " Perhaps this way of thinking will appear to you " very strange*, but you ought not to suspect its " sincerity; mankind is not entirely corrupted, and " there are still some remains of primitive virtue: " but if any one should persist in not believing me, " it will only serve as a fresh incitement, that he " may see accomplished what he judged impos- " sible; for the only advantage I propose to myself " from these present misfortunes is, to put an end " to them in such a manner as may do honour to " my virtue, and to give an example which may " prove to the whole world, that even civil wars " may have a happy conclusion."

Such was the magnanimous clemency of Aurelius. It was in these terms he spoke to the soldiers, and in the same style he wrote to the senate No invective, no reproach against Avidius, unless that he treated him often as ungrateful. Avidius, on his part, always respected Aurelius, and used no indecent expression against him, at least in public; for we have seen that in private he did not spare him.

Aurelius

* Παραδοξα μεν ισως ταυθ' υμιν φαινεται· αλλ' ουκ απιστειν υμας αυτοις δει· ὁ γαρ τις και απλως παντα τα αγαθα εκ των ανθρωπων απολωλεν, αλλ' εστι και παρ' ημιν ετι τας αρχαιας αρετης λειψανον· αν δε τις απιστη τις, και δια τουτο μειζον εστι μοι το επιθυμημα ινα ὁ μηδεις αν πιστευσει γενεσθαι δυναιτο, τουτο ιδη γενομενον· ως εγωγε τουτ' αν μονον εκ των παροντων κακων κερδαναιμι, ει δυνηθειην καλως θεσθαι το πραγμα, καὶ δειξαι παντι ανθρωποις, ὁτι και εμφυλιοις πολεμοις εστιν ορθως χρησασθαι. *Dio.*

Aurelius being obliged to interrupt the course of his victories in Germany, prepared to march against Avidius; but what he had foreseen came to pass; the affair was ended without him by the zeal of some officers, who conspired the death of the usurper. Antoninus, a centurion, upon a march, attacked him sword in hand, and wounded him in the neck; he could not repeat the stroke, being prevented by the motion of his horse, and Avidius had very nearly escaped; but a decurion*, who was in the plot, completed what the other had begun; the rebel was slain upon the spot, and the two officers having cut off his head, carried it to the emperor. Thus Avidius perished, after a reign of three months and six days, justly compared by Dion to a dream. It is no where said that any endeavoured to defend him against those who slew him; his pretorian prefect was killed with him, and his son Mecianus met the same fate at Alexandria. The rebel was universally abandoned. It appears that the soldiers, and the nations who had acknowledged him, after a short fit of drunkenness and infatuation, unanimously returned to their affection for Aurelius. The false belief they had of that prince's death was the only thing that had seduced them. As soon as they knew he was alive, the enchantment ceased, and all rejoiced at the death of his rival, except the people of Antioch, who were attached to Avidius by some particular reasons, which are not explained.

Avidius Cassius is killed at the end of three months by two officers of his army.

Aurelius, after the danger was over, performed his promises of clemency which he had made at the beginning of the insurrection. When they brought him the head of his enemy, he did not discover any joy, and ordered it to be honourably interred. It was without his order, and entirely through the impetuosity of the soldiers, that Avidius's son and his pretorian prefect were killed, with a few centurions,

* This word signifies a subaltern officer of the cavalry.

turions, who were most guilty. There was no other blood shed; and the prince's whole attention was employed in moderating the punishments which were so justly deserved. The senate had declared him an enemy of the public, and confiscated all his effects. Aurelius granted to his children the half of his forfeiture, and he would not suffer even that half to be brought to the imperial treasury, but to that of the public. He excepted likewise from confiscation all jewels of gold and silver, and precious stones, and made a present of them to the daughters of the rebel. Alexandra, one of them, and Druentianus her husband, had their liberty to go where they pleased. All Avidius's children (Heliodorus excepted, who probably was more culpable than the rest, and who for that reason was shut up in an island) lived in full security, not as the posterity of a public enemy, but with all the splendour of their ancient fortune. Aurelius carried his goodness so far as to put them under the protection of his aunt's husband, and to forbid reproaching them with their family misfortune; and there were some condemned at law for having insulted them. The accomplices of the rebellion partook of the same clemency from the prince they had offended; he desired the senate not to treat them with severity; the greatest punishment any of them suffered was banishment, from which they were soon after re-
Dio. ap. Val. called. History particularly mentions Flavius Calvisius, prefect of Egypt, who had excited that province to revolt, and who, notwithstanding, neither lost his estate nor his life, but was only confined to an island: the emperor even caused all the accounts he had received against him to be burnt, that there might remain no trace of a crime which had been pardoned.

It was not without disapprobation that Aurelius conducted himself in this manner; many thought his indulgence went too far; he was even reproached with it, "If Avidius had conquered," said they to him,

him, "would he have acted so by you?" Aurelius's answer is remarkable: "* With the life we lead, "and the profession we make of honouring the "gods, we have no reason to fear being conquered." He believed, therefore, that virtue was a safeguard against misfortunes—an opinion often proved to be false by a thousand contradictory instances; it was, however, a system he had adopted, and he supported it by examples. He pretended no Roman emperor had met with a fatal end, who had not deserved it by his vices; and, in proof of this, he quoted Caligula, Nero, Otho, Vitellius, and Domitian. Galba puzzled him, but Aurelius ranked him with the other princes upon this principle, the truth of which may be easily contested, that avarice is the greatest blemish that can sully the life of a sovereign; on the other hand, he observed, that neither of his four predecessors, nor Augustus, the founder of monarchical government, had become victims either to plots or revolts; and that enterprises formed against good princes had always failed, and turned to the destruction of their authors; but if these inductions could raise a moral probability, they are still far from certainty, and, to the disgrace of mankind, the exceptions to it are not rare.

Aurelius, in the merciful plan which he followed in regard to the rebels, had particularly to withstand (as I before observed) the solicitations of Faustina. She had † written to him upon that subject, showing him the necessity of providing for the safety of his family

* Non sic Deos colimus, et sic vivimus, ut ille nos vinceret. *Vulcat. Avid.* 8.

† Tillemont suspects this letter of Faustina, and Aurelius's answer, as false, because there are particular circumstances hard to reconcile with history. These letters, however, have a very natural air, which does not look like fiction; besides, we are so ill informed of historical accounts, and precise dates of facts, that it appears to me too rigid to reject ancient pieces for no other reason but the embarrassment which may arise solely from our want of sufficient light.

family by examples of severity. His answer was, "My dear Faustina, by pressing me to punish Avidius's accomplices, you show your tenderness for your husband and children; but I am governed by more sublime principles, and am resolved to pardon the family and accomplices of the rebel; I will even write to the senate to entreat them to moderate their zeal in the punishment of the guilty. I know nothing more calculated than clemency to gain a Roman emperor the love of the people; it was this virtue which has raised Cæsar and Augustus to the rank of the gods; it was this which, above all, acquired your father the surname of *Pius*. In a word, if the war had ended to our wishes, Avidius himself had not suffered death. Be easy; I believe I may say, with as much reason as the poet Horace, the gods protect me, my piety is pleasing to the gods*."

Aurelius, pursuant to what he had observed to Faustina, wrote to the senate in favour of those who had shown themselves his enemies: "I pray and conjure you," says he in his letter, "not to seek to signalize your justice, but to preserve the honour of my clemency, or rather of yours. Let it not be said that the senate, in the present affair, has condemned any to death. I beg of you no senator may be punished; that you shed not the blood of any person of distinction; that the exiles may return; and that those whose goods were confiscated may have them restored. I heartily wish I could in the same manner give life to the dead! for the revenge which an emperor takes of injuries he has received are never approved of†. If the vengeance must be owned not to be unjust, it

* Dî me tuentur. Dis pietas mea
. . . . . cordi est. *Horat. Od.* I. 17.

† Non enim unquam placet in imperatore vindicta sui doloris; quæ etsi justior fuerit, acrior videtur. *Vulcat. Avid.* 12.

" it is charged with rigour; just, yet still it is con-
" sidered as severe. You will therefore grant a
" pardon to Avidius's children, his son-in-law, and
" his wife. What! do I say, a pardon? they are not
" guilty: let them pass their life quietly, sensible
" that they live under the government of Aure-
" lius; let them at least enjoy a part of their fortunes,
" and the most valuable jewels; let them be rich,
" and void of all fear; let them go wherever they
" will; and let them be a proof to all nations of my
" clemency and yours: after all, it is no great ef-
" fort of mercy to exempt from punishment the
" wife and children of the head of a conspiracy.
" I entreat you to show the same indulgence to the
" accomplices who are of the rank of senators or
" knights, and to spare them from death, confis-
" cation, fear, ignominy, and all kind of punish-
" ment. I desire that you procure to my govern-
" ment this singular glory, that in a rebellion no
" person has suffered death, unless during the tu-
" mult, and under arms *."

Upon reading this letter of Aurelius in the senate, it raised very great applauses. Vulcatius has preserved to us the acclamations which were pronounced upon the occasion. What I find most deserving of notice, in regard to the sequel of the history, is, that the senate desired the tribunitial power for Commodus. I shall further observe, that among the titles which zeal and affection lavishly bestowed on so deserving an emperor, we find that of philosopher, which Aurelius, when at the height of his grandeur, was very fond of.

His clemency to the family of his enemy was not subject to any alteration. He pardoned so sincerely all those who belonged to Cassius, that he even admitted them to honours and employments. A de-

 claration

* Detisque hoc meis temporibus, ut, in causa tyrannidis qui in tumultu cecidit, probetur occisus.

claration of his, related by Dion, sullies a little the glory of so sublime a conduct: Aurelius, (according to this historian) when he pressed the senate to pardon the guilty, declares, that if he did not obtain his request, he would seek means to procure himself a sudden death. Extravagant language, and which would incline one to doubt the sincerity of the sentiments of the speaker, if the impression it made was not corrected by the effects.

The revolt of Cassius, a Syrian by birth, and governor of Syria, gave occasion to observe, that it was contrary to sound politics to trust the government of a country to a person who might before be powerful there by means of his relations and friends: to prevent such a danger, a regulation was made, forbidding to put a native at the head of a province.

I must not here omit one circumstance of the troubles in the East, which does great honour to our religion: no Christian favoured the criminal designs of Cassius; none were more faithful to the emperors than those whom no punishment could compel to pay them honours due only to God.

No Christian took part in Cassius's revolt. Tertull. Apolog.

SECT. III.

Aurelius visits the eastern provinces. Cassius's papers burnt without being read. Aurelius pardons the cities and nations who had followed Cassius's party. He maintains peace with the kings of the East. Death of Faustina. Irregularities in her conduct. Aurelius's excessive patience in this respect. He causes divine honours to be paid her after her death. He takes a concubine. He visits Alexandria and Athens. He returns to Italy. An account of his too great indulgence to his son Commodus. Bad character of this young prince. Triumph of Aurelius. Largesses. He passes almost two years at Rome. Renewal of the

war with the Marcomanni. Commodus's marriage. Singular petition of the philosophers to Aurelius. He departs to the war, and obtains great advantages. He dies in Pannonia. Aurelius's family. The whole empire bewail his death. They confer upon him all kinds of honours, human and divine. Public scourges, against which his goodness was a remedy. He persecuted the Christians. Famous philosophers in his reign. Aurelius himself. Crescent and Celsus. Sextus Empiricus. Demonax. Apuleius. Lucian, enemy of philosophers. Other writers of different kinds. Galen. Pausanias. Aulus Gellius. Polyenus. Hermogenes. History of the false soothsayer Alexander.

M. Aurelius visits the eastern provinces. Dio. & Capit. M. Ant. 25, 26.

ALTHOUGH Cassius's rebellion had been crushed almost in the birth, Aurelius rightly judged that so great a commotion must have left the eastern provinces in some confusion, which required his presence to settle; he therefore went to visit them, and, at the same time that he was careful to revive in those parts a respect for his authority, he left every where marks of his clemency.

Cassius's papers burnt without being read.

All the papers found with Cassius after his death were brought to him, letters and memoirs containing proofs of the correspondence which he had held in different parts of the empire; Aurelius burnt them all without reading them, saying, That he would not put himself in a situation to be obliged to hate*. Some have ascribed the honour of this action to Martius Verus, whom the emperor had charged with the war against the rebel; they say that this general, having got Cassius's papers, burnt them, not doubting but Aurelius would be pleased with it, or was willing to risk his displeasure, choosing he alone should perish rather than be the

* Ne, insidiatoribus cognitis, invitus quosdam habere posset offensos. *Amm. Marc.* l. XXI.

cause of destruction to many others. Whether Aurelius destroyed these memoirs himself, or approved of his general's preventing his knowing them, his goodness still deserves the same commendation.

M. Aurelius pardons the cities and nations who had followed Cassius.

He pardoned the cities and nations who had embraced Cassius's party; the city of Antioch only, which had been more violent and obstinate in the rebellion than the rest, felt some effects of his just resentment; he would not honour it with his presence when he came into Syria, and sent a severe decree, which forbade to the inhabitants what of all things they loved, shows and public diversions, and even every kind of assembly, all consultation in common, and all the exercise of what we would call municipal offices: but this good prince's resentment was not of long duration; he was not proof against the marks of repentance which the people of Antioch gave him; he restored them their privileges, and visited their city before he left the province.

He preserves peace with the kings of the East.

Whilst he was in Syria, the eastern kings hastened to make their court to him, and he received an embassy from the king of the Parthians. His coming into that country was undoubtedly disagreeable to those princes who were better acquainted with the power of a Roman emperor than with his moderation. Ever prudent, and free from ambition, Aurelius maintained peace, renewed treaties, made himself beloved by the princes and nations, and left behind him every where monuments of a philosophy which consisted not in fair speeches, but in deeds really beneficial to human society.

Death of Faustina. Dio. & Capit. M. Ant. 26. 19.

He had brought his wife Faustina along with him, and he lost her in this expedition; she died in a village of Cappadocia, situated near Mount Taurus, and called Halala, where she was seized with a sudden and unforeseen illness, which carried her off very soon. Those who have accused her of being an accomplice, or rather the instigator of the rebellion, have not considered her death as a natural

one,

one, they suppose she designedly hastened it herself, for fear lest her secret machinations should be discovered; but we have already observed, that her correspondence with the rebels is not at all proved, and consequently we do not seek any mystery in her death, which was occasioned by the gout in her head.

Irregularities of her conduct

As to her manner of life there is no difference of opinion; all authors agree that she was a second Messalina; they have even related particulars which modesty obliges us to suppress: it is sufficient to observe, that she gave just cause to suspect the legitimacy of her son Commodus, who, having no dispositions but such as were mean and sanguinary, appeared a son more worthy of a gladiator than of Aurelius.

Faustina's irregularities were no secret to her husband, who, with a patience carried undoubtedly too far, was not in the least moved, and bore with an inexcusable indifference what was a shame to him not to prevent. When they exhorted him to divorce a wife who dishonoured him, "I must then," says he, "restore her fortune." Burrhus formerly had said as much to Nero in regard to Octavia, but the case was widely different. Aurelius did more; he invented for Faustina a title of honour till then unusual; he styled her the Mother of Armies and Camps; and, as if he wanted to stretch so indecent a stoicism to the utmost length, he even bestowed honours and employments upon those who entertained criminal correspondence with his wife: history mentions several; they were publicly known, and the emperor's calm indolence was acted upon the theatre in his presence.

He causes divine honours to be paid her after her death.

He pursued the same plan of dissimulation even after death had freed him from so scandalous a wife. He prayed the senate to decree her divine honours, and to build her a temple: the senate agreed to it, and ordered, moreover, silver statues of Aurelius

and Faustina to be placed in the temple of Venus; and that before these statues all the young women who should be married should come with their future husbands to offer sacrifices; that there should be carried to the theatre the image of Faustina in gold every time Aurelius assisted at the show; that it should be put in the same place she used when alive, and that the ladies of the first rank should sit round by way of train. To the Faustinian girls established by Titus Antoninus, Aurelius added others in honour of his wife. Had he then a design to invite all the married and unmarried women of Rome to become Faustinas?

Memoirs of Trevoux, July 1731, art. 74.

He studied how to immortalize, by monuments of every kind, the name of a wife whom nothing suited so well as oblivion. There is yet to be seen, in the cabinet of the capitol, a fragment of a triumphal arch of Aurelius, where the apotheosis of Faustina is represented. He established a colony in the village where she died, and made it a city, which he called Faustinapolis: but what exceeds all bounds is this, that in a work where he was under no necessity to speak of Faustina, he makes a panegyric upon her, and congratulates himself, and thanks the gods for giving him a wife full of gentleness, tender affection, and evenness of manners. This is carrying goodness too far, it is forgetting that all the virtues consist in a medium, beyond which they become vices.

He takes a concubine. Capit. M. Ant. 29.

Another thing of a different kind appears to me singular, that this prince then, above fifty-four years old, and always infirm, should take a concubine after the death of his wife. Fabia or Fadia, sister of L. Verus, passionately wished to marry him, to become empress. Aurelius justly thought he should not give his children a mother-in-law; but he had not resolution to dispense with a concubine, and chose the daughter of the intendant of his wife's household.

I return

I return to the expeditions undertaken by Aurelius after the revolt and death of Cassius. From Syria he went into Egypt, and came to Alexandria, which had discovered great warmth for the rebellious party; nevertheless, as the Alexandrians had not been so bad as the Antiochians, he easily forgave them, and lived in their city more like a citizen and a philosopher than an emperor. He visits Alexandria and Athens. Id. ibid. 26, 27. and Dio.

After he had restored order and peace in the eastern parts of the empire, he prepared to return to Italy, and passed through Athens; there he was initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries. He gratified the Athenians with syndry honourable and useful privileges; and as that city had been in all times the mother of arts and sciences, and drew an infinite number of strangers thither to improve themselves in learning, he reckoned, that to establish professors at Athens was to make himself the benefactor of mankind; he therefore appointed some with good salaries for all the different branches of literature.

On his return to Italy, he was taken in a storm; however, he safely arrived at Brundusium, and immediately he and all his retinue put on the gown or habit of peace. He never suffered the soldiers to appear in a warlike dress at Rome or in Italy. He returns into Italy.

The triumphant return of Aurelius was a matter of great joy to the metropolis. He returned conqueror of the Marcomanni and Quadi, and the peace-maker of all the East. Upon the occasion of so many happy events, the emperor's family had received additional honours and dignities. The emperor, during this expedition, had named Pompeianus, his son-in-law, for the consulship, and loaded his son Commodus with several titles which brought him near to the sovereign rank, to which he raised him soon after. The people rejoiced to see this prince, as he advanced in age, rise in splendour and dignity, but without reason; and it must be owned, that in Aurelius's behaviour to his son, it was easier

to discover the indulgent father than the man of abilities and good discernment.

Account of his over-indulgent behaviour to his son Commodus

Bad character of this prince.

Commodus had shown himself, from his youth, such as he afterwards proved, without dignity, without sentiment, without courage, susceptible of all bad impressions, but averse to every kind of good that was endeavoured to be instilled into him. He had a strong passion for pleasure, with a violent aversion to business. If he had any talents, they were such as did not suit his rank; he knew how to dance and sing, he was a comedian and gladiator; but the masters whom his father placed about him, to improve his understanding, and the lessons of prudence and virtue which he gave himself, did not meet with any admittance or good inclination in this prince: such is the power of natural disposition, or of the bad counsel of courtiers, says the historian*. The passions soon discovered themselves in him, and his very infancy began to be sullied with debauch; at the age of twelve he discovered his cruelty, by ordering the person who had not sufficiently warmed his bath to be thrown into a hot furnace; and his preceptor was obliged to cause a sheep's-skin to be burnt in the furnace, that the young prince might be deceived with the smell, and believe his orders had been executed.

It is not easy to determine what conduct Aurelius should have observed with his son Commodus; Julian solves the difficulty, and scruples not to affirm, that having a son-in-law, a man of eminent merit, capable to govern the empire, and in whose hands Commodus had been a thousand times better than in his own, Aurelius should have made Pompeianus his successor. I dare not entirely adopt so bold a judgment; I shall only observe, that the succession was not settled by any immutable law among the Romans,

* Tantum valet ingenii vis, aut eorum qui in aula institutores habentur. *Lamprid.*

Romans, as it is with us; that the appointment of an emperor had always at least the appearance of an election; and that Aurelius would have done nothing contrary to the constitution of the government, if he had adopted a successor in prejudice of his unworthy son. He was far from this opinion; there was no precaution which he did not take to secure the throne to Commodus, and he did for him what till then was without precedent.

After giving him the title of Cæsar when an infant, introducing him, when he entered into his fourteenth year, into all the public colleges of priests, and giving him the same year the manly gown, he declared him Prince of Youth. This ceremony was performed the seventh of July, in the year of Rome 926, in the presence of the army of Pannonia, where Aurelius had ordered his son upon the first news of Cassius's revolt, desiring undoubtedly to show to the mal-contents a successor out of his infancy, and already of an age to support him: so far Aurelius did no more than imitate what had been practised by many other emperors, and Commodus was then so young, that there was still room to hope.

Aurelius, when he set out for Syria and the East, carried his son along with him, and admitted him, during the expedition, into the tribunitial power with himself, pursuant to the desire of the senate in their acclamations. Commodus was therefore invested with this distinguishing mark of the sovereign power when he was not quite fifteen. This was new; never before had a prince of that age been raised to such a dignity. Aurelius went still further; he caused his son to be proclaimed emperor with himself upon the occasion of some victory of which we have no particular knowledge; he associated him in the triumph, as we shall soon mention, the twenty-third of December, in the year of Rome 927; and having named him consul the following year,

Capit. M. Ant. 27.

Lamprid.

year, after he had obtained from the senate a dispensation of his age. At last, that he might leave no distinction between him and his son, he declared him emperor; this was absolutely without example, and what is not to be excused.

Tillem. M. Aurel. art. 24.

He soon had reason to repent; for this young prince, seeing himself raised so high, pretended he was become master of his own conduct; he would no longer suffer the regular and virtuous monitors whom his father had placed about him; he associated with men of no morals, and who flattered his wicked inclinations. Aurelius endeavoured to remove them from him; he turned them out of the palace; but Commodus sickening upon the grief this caused in him, the tender father had the weakness to replace about his son these advisers of corruption and debauch; then this young prince gave himself up to every kind of extravagance; wine, women, gaming, were his only employments; not content to fill the city with his irregularities, he even turned the palace into a place of infamy; he acted, at least in secret, the mean parts of a charioteer and gladiator; he disgraced himself by the most servile and shameful offices, so that he appeared rather born to disgrace than to the imperial dignity; and Aurelius thought himself obliged to suffer what he had put out of his power to prevent.

Lamprid. Commod. 12.

Not to interrupt the account of this prince's conduct to his son, I have anticipated the order of time, and must now speak of what Aurelius did upon his return to Rome.

M. Aurelius's triumph. Largesses. Capit. M. Ant. 27. Aurel. Vict.

He triumphed with Commodus, as I have said, over the Marcomanni, and other German nations he had conquered; this was his second triumph, and he accompanied it with games, shows, and largesses, which exceeded every thing that had been done by his predecessors on the like occasions. Dion relates that the emperor, according to the ancient practice, giving an account, in an assembly of the people, of

Dio.

his

his military exploits, observed he had been absent many years. "Eight," cried the multitude, and at the same time all present expressing that number with their fingers, gave him to understand that they expected as many pieces of gold each as the emperor's absence had lasted years. "Very well, "eight," replied Aurelius, and accordingly there were distributed by his order two hundred deniers to each citizen, which in value is equal to eight pieces of gold. Never had any emperor carried his liberality to the people such a length. It was at the same time, as Dion relates, that he granted a discharge to all the subjects of the empire of what might be due to the public treasury for the space of forty-six years, and likewise the largesses to the city of Smyrna, which had suffered greatly from an earthquake.

He passes almost two years at Rome. Capi.

It appears that Aurelius, after his return from the East, passed almost two years at Rome, and employed that time of tranquillity in reforming sundry abuses in the administration of affairs, and establishing better order in the government: but these cares were interrupted by the necessity of returning to the Danube, and of renewing the war against the Marcomanni.

Renewal of the war against the Marcomanni.

I know not whether, when Aurelius quitted Germany to go into the East, that war was really ended; it appears more probable that there were some remains of it; it had so many different branches, so many nations were concerned in it, that it was a hydra, which, humbled on one side, revived on another; perhaps likewise the renewal of the war ought to be attributed to the ambition of the Romans, who never left the German nations at peace but when they were otherwise employed, and who returned to the charge when they had no other affair upon their hands; it cannot be doubted but Aurelius designed to reduce Marcomannia to a Roman province.

Whatever

Capit. Pertin. 2.

Whatever was the cause, the effect is certain. Pertinax, who had accompanied Aurelius into Syria, was now sent to the Danube to stop the incursions of the Germans; and the two Quintiliuses, brothers famous for their unalterable union, likewise for their military skill, their experience, and their courage, having been charged, in the room of Pertinax, or jointly with him, to reduce these fierce enemies, could not succeed, nor force the barbarians to submit; Aurelius therefore judged his presence was necessary in those parts, and resolved to return to the banks of the Danube, and carry his son Commodus with him, whom he married at that time to Crispina, daughter of Bruttius Præsens, a person of consular dignity. Dion remarks, that he practised a form used in the earliest times in the declaration of war; and that he threw towards the enemy's country a spear, which was kept for that purpose in the temple of Bellona.

Commodus's marriage. Capit. M. Ant. 27. and Dio.

Remarkable petition of the philosophers. Avid. Vict.

There is a very remarkable circumstance told of his departure: The philosophers of his court, seeing him engaged in a war from which very possibly he might not return, were afraid lest with him should perish the most sublime secrets of philosophy, in which he was better instructed than any other, and consequently they prayed him to explain them without reserve; and he had, it is said, the complaisance to give them learned lectures for three days. I know not what stress is to be laid upon this account of two writers whose merit is not great; but I find in Aurelius's own work a way of thinking more becoming a prince; he commends Junius Rusticus, who had taught him not to give in to the taste of the sophists to compose philosophical dissertations, or to deliver moral discourses. A prince ought undoubtedly to be acquainted with the rules of morality, and to show a living example in his conduct, but he is to leave to others the part of giving lectures.

M. Aurel. l. 1.

Marcus

Marcus Aurelius set out the fifth of August, in the year of Rome 929. We know but little more of the particulars of his exploits, than that things succeeded to his wish; Paternus gained a great victory over the barbarians, in consequence of which Aurelius was proclaimed emperor the tenth time; Pertinax distinguished himself likewise in Mœsia and Dacia. Aurelius was now flattering himself with the hopes of quickly subduing enemies hitherto unconquerable, when death prevented him, two years after his departure from Rome.

He departs for the war, and obtains great advantages. Tillem. M. Ant. art. 25.

He fell sick at Vindobona * in Pannonia; but his distemper was not the cause of his death, if we believe Dion, but is to be imputed to the crime of his physicians, bribed by Commodus: others say, that he died willingly, and of choice, not being able to bear the grief and shame which the irregularities and shocking vices of his son occasioned him, who was disposed to become another Nero. I drop these reports, which may very probably have no other foundation than the regret which Aurelius left behind him, and the hatred which Commodus's tyranny deserved. It appears that the plague had got into the army, and that the emperor was seized with it.

He dies in Pannonia. Capit. M. Ant. 27. 28. Dio. Herod. l. 1. Aurel. Vict.

The sixth day of his illness, perceiving he was faint, and being less affected with his approaching death than the evils he foresaw must follow, he was desirous to make the last effort for putting his son in the way of a prudent conduct and a virtuous government; he sent for him to his bedside, with his friends and most faithful counsellors, and, raising himself a little upon his elbow, he spoke as follows:

"My friends, I am not at all surprised that you "are affected with the condition you see me in; "men

* Vienna in Austria.

" men naturally sympathize with the sufferings of " their fellow-creatures, especially when they are " before their eyes; I can even promise myself " something more from your sentiments. Behold, " the time is come for me to gather the fruits of " the benefits with which I have loaded you for so " many years, and for you to show your gratitude. " My son stands in need of you. It is you who " have hitherto brought him up for me; but you " see to what dangers his youth is exposed, and " how much, in an age which may very justly be " compared to the agitation of a tempestuous sea, " it is necessary for him to have the assistance of " able pilots, who may govern him wisely, and " prevent his inexperience from running upon " rocks, and giving himself up to the seduction of " vice. Be to him moderators; direct him with " your counsels; and, instead of one father whom " death hath taken from him, make him find many " fathers in you. * For, my son, you must know " that there are no riches which are sufficient " to fill the insatiable gulph of tyranny, no guard " so numerous as to secure the life of a prince, if " he is not careful to gain the affections of his " subjects. They alone have a right to a long and " happy enjoyment of sovereign power who en- " deavour not to terrify by their cruelty, but to " reign in the hearts of their subjects, by that love " which

* Οὔτε γὰρ χρημάτων πλήθος ὐδὲν αὔταρκες πρὸς τυραννιδος ἀκρασιαν, ὐτε δορυφόρων φρυρὰ ἱκανὴ ῥύεσθαι τὸν ἄρχόντα, εἰ μὴ πρυπάρχοι ἢ τῶν ὑπηκόων εὔνοια· μάλιστα δὲ ἐκεῖνοι εἰς ἀρχῆς μῆκος ἀκινδύνως ἤλασαν, ὅσοι μὴ φόβον ἐξ ὠμότητος, πόθον δε της αὐτῶν χρηστότητος ταῖς τῶν ἀρχομένων ψυχαῖς ἐνέσταξαν· ὐ γὰρ οἱ ἐξ ἀνάγκης δυλεύοντες, ἀλλ' οἱ μετὰ πειθῦς ὑπακυοντες, ἀνύποπτοι, καὶ ἔξω κολακείας προσποιήτυ δρῶντες τε καὶ πάσχοντες διατελύσιν· ὐδε ποτε ἀφηνιάζυσιν, ἢν μὴ βίᾳ καὶ ὕβρει ἐπὶ τῦτο ἀχθῶσι· χαλεπὸν δὲ μετρῆσαι τε καὶ ὅρον ἐπιθεῖναι ἐπιθυμίαις ὑπηρετύσης ἐξυσίας. *Herodian.*

" which their goodness to all who obey them ne-
" cessarily inspires. It is not to slaves, subject only
" from necessity, that one can trust; it is to affec-
" tionate citizens, attached with good-will, who
" are led not by flattery but duty, and whose fide-
" lity is as stable as the principles upon which it is
" founded. Minds so disposed never think of
" throwing off the yoke, unless the violence and
" insolence of the prince make them first think of
" it. Take care of this, my son; for it is difficult
" for a man to set bounds to his desires; when he
" has it in his power to gratify them without
" bounds. See, my friends, the counsels you ought
" to give to this young prince; put him often in
" mind of what I have now represented to him; by
" so doing, you will make him the source of your
" own happiness, and of the happiness of mankind;
" and you will acquit yourselves so to M. Aurelius,
" as he shall be indebted to you for more than you
" are to him."

Such were the advices, as fruitless as wise, which Aurelius gave, when he was dying, to his son. He survived them but one day and a night, and died the seventeenth of March, in the year of Rome 931, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, having reigned, after the death of Titus Antoninus, nineteen years and some days. Dion relates, that the last day of his life, the tribune being come, according to custom, to desire of him the word, he answered him, " Ad-
" dress yourself to the rising sun; as for me, I am
" setting." This answer, which seems to tax Commodus with an impatient desire to reign, agrees with the pretended poisoning, which, according to this historian, even the prince himself, when he was dying, was not ignorant of. I find in Capitolinus some other expressions which are ascribed to him in his last moments, and I do not give them a place here,

here, as I discover nothing in them worthy of Aurelius.

Family of M. Aurelius. Lamprid. Comm. 1. & Capit. M. Ant. 21.

By his wife Faustina * he had three sons and many daughters; Antoninus Geminus, Commodus's twin-brother, died at four years old, and so served for an instance of the futility of the art of the astrologers, who had promised an equal length of life to the two princes; a third son of Aurelius lived almost to the age of seven, and received the title of Cæsar with Commodus; a swelling near his ear, which made an operation necessary, occasioned his death. His father bore this misfortune with firmness, and, after giving five days to the feelings of nature, he returned to business, and comforted even the physicians or surgeons, who were much grieved at the ill success of their operation. Thus Aurelius, when he died, had no other son than Commodus—happier if he had left none.

Among his daughters we know only Lucilla, wife first to the emperor Verus, and afterwards to Pompeianus. All we can say of the rest is, that their father, in choosing them husbands, paid much more attention to noble sentiments than to noble birth, and chose for sons-in-law not those who could count a long train of ancestors, or who shone with their riches, but men of approved personal merit and virtue.

Herodian. l. 1.

All the empire laments his death. Herod. l. 1. & Capit. M. Ant. 18. and 19. and Dio.

The death of Aurelius caused a sincere and universal mourning over the whole empire. Though he had maintained military discipline with great strictness, and had shown no weak indulgences to the soldiers, he was notwithstanding beloved by them. The senate, the people, the provinces, all his subjects, bewailed him bitterly; and, though so deserving himself to be regretted, his son gave occasion

* I do not reckon two young princes, who seem to have been born before he was emperor, and who died soon after their birth. *See Tillemont.*

occasion to have a still more lively sense of the loss which the empire has sustained.

They pay him all kind of honours human and divine.

After the news of his death was come to Rome, the senate assembled in their mourning habits; they began with shedding tears in abundance, but the admiration of his virtue soon raised other sentiments in their minds; they said that the gods, having lent Aurelius to the world, had now recalled him to heaven; and on the day of his solemn funeral, when his body was brought to Rome, instead of tears, the forum and Campus Martius resounded with his praises. The senate and the people assembled together, without the usual formalities of decrees, proclaimed him a god; with one voice they saluted him as such, not from flattery, but from a persuasion, which, though founded upon the chimeras of idolatry, was not the less serious. They decreed him afterwards all honours human and divine, a triumphal arch, a gold statue in the senate, a temple, an altar, and priests. Many of his predecessors had received the same external testimonies of regard; but that which here distinguishes Aurelius is the consent of the heart with the tongue, and the harmony between private practice and the public resolutions. He, says Capitolinus, who had not in his house a representation of Aurelius would have been deemed impious. This worship of him continued above an hundred years after it was in full vigour; and Dioclesian gloried in honouring Aurelius as one of the principal deities.

Not but this prince had his failings and errors; I have taken care to remark them; but his constant invariable goodness has concealed from the eyes of his cotemporaries, and of posterity, the stains which might have lessened his esteem. His name has passed almost for that of virtue; and every good prince among his successors has taken him for a model. Less of a soldier than Trajan: less steady

and open than Titus Antoninus, he has nevertheless surpassed them in glory; an evident proof that goodness is the surest and ready way for princes to make themselves illustrious for ever.

Public scourges against which his goodness serves for a remedy. Vict. Epit.

Indeed, Aurelius was alone the cause of the happiness of the time wherein he reigned, which otherwise was very unfortunate. The plague and famine laid waste Italy and the provinces; wars never ceased, first with the Parthians, afterwards with the Marcomanni. The revolt of Avidius Cassius in the East, and other rebellious commotions, of which I have made little or no mention, as we are unacquainted with the particulars, in Egypt, in the country of the Sequani, Lusitania, and in Spain.

Amidst all these evils, the prudence and goodness of the prince preserved the public happiness, and were, according to the observation even of Pagans, an alloy sent by Providence to the scourges with which mankind were afflicted.

He persecuted the Christians.

The Christians were the only people who had no share in the mildness of Aurelius's government. He is counted in our annals as the author of the fourth persecution, which made a great number of martyrs through all the empire; the most famous are St Polycarp at Smyrna, St Justin at Rome, St Pothin, St Blandina, and their companions, at Lyons.

If it should be thought strange that an emperor, so beneficent by disposition and principles, should treat the most faithful and virtuous of his subjects with an inhuman severity, we shall answer with Tillemont, first, that Aurelius was attached, even to superstition, to idolatrous worship, of which Christianity is the ruin; in the next place, that the philosophers, who had great credit with this prince, were the declared enemies of Christians, who, by their example, and often by their discourses, unmasked the false virtues of these pretended followers of wisdom; and, lastly, that M. Aurelius had a great

great regard for the laws. Now, the laws of the empire proscribed the Christian religion, which openly attacked the religion of the state.

It is, however, true that Aurelius issued out no edict against the Christians; he even forbade, after the miracle which rescued him from danger in the country of the Quadi, the accusing them upon account of their religion; but he did not deliver them from death when they were brought to trial. He suffered the edicts of his predecessors to remain in force; and, besides, the fanatic zeal of the magistrates, and the mad rage of the people, did not wait for the emperor's orders to exercise the greatest cruelties upon men whose sanctity was a reproach to their vices and their impiety.

Famous philosophers in his reign.

The reign of Aurelius was the reign of philosophy; I mean moral philosophy, the only philosophy esteemed by the Romans, as I have observed more than once. The sovereign's taste for this study could not fail of being imitated by his subjects; wherefore his age produced a great number of philosophers, at the head of whom he himself must be placed, not only as exhibiting in his conduct the most perfect model of practical philosophy, but as the author of an excellent work, which I have often cited, and which, more valuable for its excellent maxims than style, establishes the purest morality human reason can attain to. This work is written in Greek, the natural language of philosophy.

Crescent and Celsus Tillem.

Among the persons who distinguished themselves at this time by the name of philosophers, I observe, first, two famous enemies of Christianity, Crescent the Cynic, who disputed with Justin, and contributed to his obtaining the crown of martyrdom; and Celsus the Epicurean, whose writings against the Christian religion were afterwards refuted by Origen.

Sextus Empiricus.

Sextus, surnamed Empiricus, has left us books of Pyrrhonism, where, refining beyond all measure, he

serves for a proof, that reason, by analyzing her ideas, brings them to nothing; and that, not attending to the voice of nature, but seeking for principles of what is itself a first principle, she destroys the foundations of all certainty; and, raising difficulties upon difficulties, she is at last caught in her own snares.

Demonax. All we know of Demonax is from the life which Lucian has written of that philosopher. Among a great many remarkable sayings which the author of his life relates of him, there is a famous one, and well worthy of notice. The Athenians, with whom he passed the greatest part of his time, though a native of Cyprus, having a desire to introduce gladiators into their city, "Begin, then," says Demonax to them, "by destroying the altar "which you have erected to compassion."

Apulcius. Apulcius ought to be ranked with the philosophers who pretended to join magic to philosophy. He was an Apollonius Tyanæus in miniature; miracles were ascribed to him, and a supernatural commerce with the gods or demons. In the main, all he did was mere imposture, by which he proposed to raise his character for knowledge, and to make himself a subject of admiration. He was of Africa, born at Madaura in Numidia, and called himself a descendant from Plutarch by his mother. His laboured style savours of the climate in which he was born.

Lucian an enemy of philosophers. We must not reckon among the philosophers, but among their enemies, the amiable and agreeable Lucian; the best writer, without doubt, of the times we are speaking of, and equal to the ancients for purity of language, and neatness of style; for politeness and ease in writing, which throws a grace upon every subject it treats, and which, taking from reason her severe aspect, makes her put on a more engaging countenance, and mixes sense with amusement. He would have been yet more praiseworthy,

worthy, if he had only employed his fine talents and delicate wit in exposing the vices of the pretended philosophers, and ridiculing the follies they delivered with so much gravity; but nothing was sacred to him, neither morals nor religion; he has sown obscenities in his works, blasphemed Christianity, and even attacked the principles of natural religion. Fond of raillery, it was enough for him to have the laugh on his side; excellent at ridicule, and incapable of any thing that was serious, truth and falsehood, honesty and dishonesty, were to him perfectly indifferent. His Dialogues of the Dead, and some other of his writings, may be read by youth with advantage. In general, the reading of this author requires stayed heads, and fixed good principles. He was the scourge of the impostors of his time. From him I have given the life and death of Peregrinus; I will likewise give the reader his account concerning the tricks of Alexander, a pretended soothsayer, after I have done with the characters of the men of distinguished genius in the reign of Aurelius.

Other writers of different kinds.

Philosophy was not the only science cultivated in this reign; it produced likewise writers of different kinds, the most famous of whom, and most to be esteemed beyond all comparison, is Galen, the second father of medicine, who was honoured with Aurelius's confidence, and survived him. It was he who prepared the treacle, which this emperor used continually, and which he considered as the great preservative of his health.

Galen.

Pausanias.

Pausanias has left us a journey through Greece, whereby he describes what is remarkable in every country and city, as to public edifices, temples, theatres, races, statues, or pictures. It is a valuable treasure for the admirers of antiquity.

Aulus Gellius.

Aulus Gellius was a grammarian, of whom we have a collection of different observations, not to be despised; but he was a mere grammarian, of little

taste, without genius, an idolizer of antiquity, and who, full of quotations from Ennius, Cato the censor, Claudius Quadrigarius, does not once name Horace, Titus Livius, or Tacitus.

Polyenus. Polyenus of Macedon dedicated to the emperors Aurelius and L. Verus, whilst they were engaged in the Parthian war, a collection of stratagems.

Hermogenes. Hermogenes the rhetorician is best known from the sad catastrophe of his understanding: master of eloquence at fifteen years old, and worthy, by his discourses and lectures, of the attention of Aurelius, he lost his memory at twenty-four, and led a long time an obscure life—a man in his childhood, and an infant in his old age*.

History of the pretended diviner Alexander. Luc. Pseudom. There remains nothing more concerning the reign of Aurelius but to set before the reader the farce which was acted by Alexander the famous impostor. He was, indeed, a very singular man in his way, and it may be useful to see, from a noted and very circumstantial example, how far imposture may be carried on one hand, and credulity on the other.

Alexander was born at Abonotica, a small city of Paphlagonia, and by the subtilty of his wit, the most acute that ever was, he strangely belied the climate which gave him birth, and which generally produced only men of dull and low capacities, and formed to be dupes. Alexander, on the contrary, had received from nature all the talents which form great cheats. Born to take advantage of the simplicity of the vulgar, he possessed, in an eminent degree, a readiness to devise, a boldness to undertake, a popular and dazzling eloquence, and withal a refined hypocrisy to conceal vice under the most deceitful appearances. Add to this the advantage of stature, a fine presence, an enchanting air, eyes full

* Ἐν παιδὶ μὲν γέρων, ἐν δὲ γέροντι παῖς. Philostr. Soph. II. 7.

full of fire, a loud voice, with every thing that can impose. Born to no fortune, his first resource was debauchery, or rather the ignominy of ministering to the debauchery of others: among those from whom he received an infamous salary, there was a countryman and disciple of Apollonius Tyaneus, a physician by profession, but, under the mask of this honourable title, exercising the infamous trade of an impostor and magician, of a revealer of secrets, skilled in procuring success in the affairs of love, revenge, estates, hidden treasures. Alexander greedily swallowed the instructions of a master in an art so agreeable to his inclination; and the master, on his part, had a pleasure in forming a scholar in whom he found the happiest dispositions for making a complete impostor.

The physician being dead, Alexander, heir to his knowledge, began to practise his lessons; and having associated a proper companion, named Coconas, they together went through the provinces, living at the expense of fools and dupes, who paid them amply for their impudent lies; among others, they made a conquest of a rich Macedonian woman, who, though upon the decline, wanted still to be admired; they so infatuated her, that she maintained them, and they followed her from Bithynia, where they first met with her, into Macedon, and to Pella, the ancient capital of the Macedonian kings.

There they made an excellent discovery in regard to the views they had formed. The country about Pella abounds with serpents of a prodigious size, and surprisingly tame; they are familiar with men, who feed them in their houses, and put them to sleep by their children; if they are trod upon, they bear it, if they are bruised, they are not angry; and they suck the women who will permit them: it was undoubtedly one of these serpents which, being found in the bed of Olympias, gave occasion to the fable of the miraculous birth of the conqueror of

Asia and the Indies. Our two impostors bought, for a small matter, one of the most beautiful of these serpents, and with this purchase they framed a system of imposture of the first class; they determined to establish an oracle, which should attract crowds of those who, from hope and fear, the two tyrannical springs of human actions, were eager after the knowledge of futurity, and susceptible of delusion.

The only point was, where to fix the scene; Cocconas inclined for Chalcedon, a city of great resort, and from whence their reputation might spread, on the one hand into Thrace, and on the other into Bithynia, Galatia, and the neighbouring regions; but Alexander judged rightly, that for the enterprise they intended, a country was to be chosen whose gross inhabitants should be disposed easily to fall into the snare; now he knew that such were his countrymen of Paphlagonia, a plain rustic people, who, if they only saw an impostor of a village with a fiddle, were sure to hear him with transport as a deity; he believed, however, he should be able to form a party at Chalcedon, just to put the affair barely in motion; and going to that city with Cocconas, they by concert hid in the ancient temple of Apollo tablets of brass, on which was written, that immediately Æsculapius, with his father Apollo, would come to Pontus, and take up their residence at Abonotica; these tablets were discovered by accomplices in the plot, and the imposture succeeded so well, that immediately the inhabitants of Abonotica began to lay the foundations of a temple to Æsculapius, who was coming to honour them with his presence. Cocconas remained at Chalcedon, where he died soon after.

As for Alexander, as he saw his imposture succeed, he pursued his scheme, and caused himself to be declared, by a pretended oracle, a descendant of the hero Perseus, and son of Podalirius; and his ignorant

ignorant fellow-citizens, who had known his father and mother, who were the very dregs of the people, believed this magnificent genealogy. In order to appear with an equipage becoming his high dignity, Alexander put on a rich dress, a tunic of white and purple, with a white cloak, and carrying a scimitar in his hand, as a symbol of his descent from Perseus, with his hair flowing in ringlets, he entered Abonotica.

He was in no haste to execute his project at once, but prepared the people, and kept them in suspence and admiration, feigning from time to time fits of prophetic fury, wherein he foamed at the mouth, by means of an herb he had taken care to chew, and which has the quality of producing that effect*. Meantime, he kept his serpent carefully concealed in his house, and proposed to fit a human head to it, made of linen; on the fore part of this head were painted, in their natural colours, all the parts and features of a face; it had a mouth which opened itself, and a tongue like a serpent's, which darted out by the help of horse-hairs gently touched; every thing being thus ready, Æsculapius was to make his appearance, for which the impostor used this device.

He went in the night, and hid in the water gathered about the foundations of the temple which was actually in building, a goose's egg, which he had emptied, and in which he put a young serpent; the water, by diluting the earth, formed a mud, which served as a safe receptacle for the egg: the day after this operation, Alexander naked, having only about his loins a scarf of gold stuff, with his scimitar in his hand, and shaking his locks, which waved in the wind, runs to the market-place, mounts the altar, and from thence haranguing the multitude,

* This herb is called in Latin struthium, or radicula. It is known with us under the name of the fuller's herb.

titude, he congratulates the city of Abonotica on the happiness they are going to enjoy of receiving the god personally, and visibly dwelling within their walls; almost all the inhabitants were present, women, children, old men, and they seemed worked up to an extasy; they prayed and adored beforehand the god who was to manifest himself; the impostor, to increase their admiration, spoke to them in an unknown tongue, introducing only, in a Hebrew or Phœnician speech, the names of Apollo and Æsculapius; then he takes his flight, and runs, with all the people after him, to the foundation of the temple, and having called for a cup, he dipped it into the mud, just where he had put the egg; he draws it up, places it in his hand, and shows it, crying aloud that he had the god; he breaks the egg, and the people are surprised to see a young serpent twisting about the soothsayer's fingers. Æsculapius is known to be worshipped under that form, and every one has heard of the history of the serpent of Epidaurus. The people of Abonotica were now convinced that they had Æsculapius present and living; they repeat their acclamations; all pray to him for health, riches, and prosperity. Alexander, still acting the enthusiast, returns, and carries the new god to his house.

He let some days pass, in order to give time to fame to publish the news of the miracle which had been wrought; he was desirous of having a greater number of spectators to the last act of his farce; and indeed there arrived great crowds of Paphlagonians, flocks of sheep (says Lucian) in the shape of men, mere empty brainless vizards*: it was in the sight of this multitude, so well fitted for his purposes, that Alexander concluded his farce, lying upon a bed,

* It must be observed, that the vizards in which plays were anciently acted among the Romans covered the whole head and face.

bed, in a room darkly illuminated, and dressed like a minister of the gods, he appeared with the large and beautiful serpent which he had brought from Macedonia, and which formed a collar about his neck, extending his tail at a distance; the head was concealed under the impostor's arm, who, instead of it, showed the representation of a human head made of linen.

It is easy to imagine what was the surprise of the spectators upon this heap of miracles; how to conceive that a little embryo should become in a few days a large and magnificent serpent with a human head, and so tame as to suffer itself to be touched by every one that pleased, for Alexander procured them that privilege. Certainly the Paphlagonians could not fail being caught by a device so well contrived, hardly could some philosophers have been guarded against it; accordingly the delusion was general, and seized all the neighbouring nations; from Galatia, Bithynia, and from Thrace, people ran to Abonotica to see with their eyes so surprising a miracle; all these countries were filled with images and representations of the new god, to whom the prophet gave the name of Glycon. There remain to this day monu- Tillem.
ments of this Pagan credulity.

After these preparations, it was not difficult to establish an oracle, the sole end to which all his projects tended as to a sure method of getting money. The building of the temple being finished, Alexander fixed the day when the god would begin to give his answers to those who consulted him; the consultation was to be made in this manner; a billet, well sealed up, was sent to the soothsayer, who carried it into the sanctuary, and, after taking some time for interrogating the god, returned the billet, sealed as he had received it, with the answer in writing. The impostor had various ways of opening the billet without being discovered; and the

credulous

credulous consulters, surprised to find an answer suited to their request, ascribed to divine illumination what was the effect of artifice; as to the rest, these pretended oracles were conducted with great address, ambiguous words, capable of different senses, if the matter was difficult, promises conditional, and which did not give any hopes of success; but in case the prophet had obtained of the god the favour desired, receipts of remedies, which he had learned from the physician, his first master, and above all, his resource was in his impudence, if the event gave him the lie. So Severianus, a general of the Roman army, at the beginning of the Parthian war, having (as I said before) consulted this new oracle, and being unfortunately defeated and slain, to the great disgrace of Æsculapius, who had promised him victory, Alexander erased out of his register the answer he had given him, and substituted another quite contrary. Upon the occasion of the war against the Marcomanni, he ordered two lions to be thrown into the Danube, assuring them of victory; the order was obeyed, and the Romans lost twenty thousand men. Aquileia was in danger from the barbarians. The impostor got off, as formerly the oracle of Delphi, in regard to Crœsus; he said the god had indeed promised victory, but without explaining whether the Romans or the Marcomanni should obtain it; and though all this so visibly demonstrated the cheat, yet it did not hurt the impostor; a superstitious credulity blinded men's understandings.

To strengthen the infatuation, by increasing the marvellous, he made his god pronounce oracles with his own voice; he put into the linen head a pipe, through which a person concealed behind delivered the answer, and made it come out at the mouth of the god; these oracles were particular favours granted only to the rich and powerful.

The

The success of these several artifices was prodigious; though each answer of the oracle cost but a drachma[*] and a third, the yearly income amounted to seven or eight hundred thousand drachmas; so that the prophet found in so large a revenue wherewith to support the service of his temple with magnificence, and to pay his interpreters, writers, heralds, and all the necessary implements for carrying on his farce; and still the largest share remained to himself.

The use he made of this money corresponded with the methods by which he acquired it: he kept a great retinue, lived sumptuously, gave himself up to the most infamous debaucheries; and frequently fathers and mothers were so infatuated as to be proud of their children and wives administering to the prophet's pleasures.

His reputation flew even to Rome; and Rutilian, a senator of the first rank, a valuable man in other respects, but extremely superstitious, having fallen into the snare, by his example drew a great many after him. Alexander received an infinite number of consultations from Rome, which he managed artfully and successfully; and the inhabitants of the metropolis were as great dupes as the Paphlagonians.

I omit many circumstances for the sake of brevity; but Lucian relates an artifice of the impostor which deserves to be mentioned: Among the consultations which came from Rome, some of them turned upon matters of delicacy; men of curiosity and keen passions, believing they wrote only for themselves, and for the god, gave a scope to their desires and expectations. The soothsayer, who opened all the billets, when he found any of this kind, laid it by, in order to keep the person in his dependence

[*] Χρυσοῦς αὐτοφάνης.

dependence through the fear of discovery, who had rashly ventured to send an indiscreet and dangerous question.

He had no need of such a precaution with regard to Rutilian, who was aiding to the imposture, and desirous to be deceived. This grave senator is an instance of the excess to which this sort of blindness may be carried.

When he heard of the oracle of Abonotica, as he was entirely given up to superstition, he was very near quitting his post to hasten to Paphlagonia: he was satisfied, however, with sending messengers after messengers with orders to bring him a faithful account; but he was unlucky in his choice of informers: they were ignorant and stupid slaves, apt to see wrong, and to add even to what they should see. Rutilian had not the least doubt of their report; and, seduced by them, he seduced (as I have said) many others, and brought the impostor many admirers.

He was so infatuated, that what should have opened his eyes only served to blind him the more: he had a son of age to apply to letters, and desired to know from Æsculapius what tutor to give him; "Homer and Pythagoras," answered the god: soon after the child died, and Alexander knew not how to bring himself off in this unlucky event; Rutilian helped him out, and pretended that such was precisely the sense of the oracle, which not having pointed out any living preceptor but Homer and Pythagoras, who were dead many ages before, clearly showed that the child would go to the Elysian fields to receive their instructions.

This stupid weakness imboldened the soothsayer the more, and he thought he might venture all with such a dupe: so Rutilian, who believed the doctrine of transmigration of souls, desiring to know under what form he had lived in former ages, and who he was whose soul had passed into his body;

Alexander,

Alexander, without hesitation, answered, "You "were first the son of Peleus, then the poet Me- "nander, and, in the third place, what you are "now; and you will become a ray of the sun, af- "ter you have passed an hundred fourscore years on "the earth."

This farce would not have been complete, if it had not ended with a marriage: Alexander was father of a daughter whom he said he had by the moon, who fell in love with him, as formerly with Endymion, whilst he slept. Rutilian, who was sixty years old, intending to marry again, applied to the oracle to determine him in his choice; the answer was, "Marry the daughter of Alexander and the "moon:" Rutilian most readily obeyed, married Alexander's daughter, and, son-in-law to the moon, offered up hecatombs to the goddess his mother-in-law, fancying himself already in the rank of the gods.

Amidst these successes, Alexander had his troubles: he had two kinds of enemies, who, though strangely different from each other, joined in unmasking the impostor; these were the Christians and the Epicureans; the one enlightened by revelation, the other instructed by their master to despise all religion, were equally formidable to a cheat who founded his credit on the most absurd superstition.

If they opposed and hurt him in their discourses, he returned the compliment: in the pretended mysteries which he instituted in imitation of the Eleusinian, he began the ceremony with proclaiming, "Hence all Christians;" and the choir answered, "Hence all Epicureans." He often repeated that Pontus was full of Atheists and Christians, and that these enemies of the gods ought to be stoned. What he advised he endeavoured more than once to execute; if he suspected any person to come into the temple with a design to ensnare him, his answer was, "To the gibbet;" and the man against whom he

he pronounced that decree, thought himself happy if he escaped from the fury of his followers, who rushed upon him like madmen. Lucian, who made that dangerous attempt, had like to have had cause to repent it.

He caught the soothsayer often in the wrong, and he boasted of the blunders he had led him into. Moreover, he endeavoured, though in vain, to undeceive Rutilian, and to divert him from an unbecoming alliance with an impostor's daughter. After such an odious offence, he nevertheless ventured to come to Abonotica, where he was to embark in a voyage for Italy. It is true, he was attended with two soldiers, whom the governor of Cappadocia had given him to guard him to the sea.

When Alexander knew that Lucian was come to the city where he reigned, he projected his destruction but by artifice: he sent for him very politely, and Lucian coming with his two soldiers, found him surrounded with a numerous court; the prophet, in his haughty way, having presented him his hand to kiss, our Epicurean, through a boyish waggery, bit his finger with great violence; the whole assembly was in a rage, and nothing less was thought of than to strangle the impious wretch who had thus abused the prophet. Alexander kept his temper; he even appeased the wrath of his admirers, and told them they were going to see an effect of Glycon's power, who knew how to turn into friends his most implacable enemies; then he made every one go out except Lucian, to whom he said, "I "know what advice you have given Rutilian against "me; why do you deal with me thus, when I can "be of service to you with that senator, and better "your fortune by his interest?" Lucian was sensible of the danger of not yielding to such advances; he therefore seemed gladly to comply, and the conversation ended with mutual marks of friendship: as a pledge of the reconciliation, Alexander sent him presents,

presents, and, when he was ready to depart, he offered to furnish him with a vessel and rowers. Lucian had forgot the maxim of not trusting a reconciled enemy, and accepted the impostor's offer, and embarked.

When he was got to sea, he observed the pilot weeping, and disputing with a mysterious air with the seamen. Lucian grew uneasy, but did not long continue so; the pilot came to him with tears in his eyes, and told him, that having lived to sixty without a crime, he could not resolve to dishonour his old age, and entail upon him and his family the anger of the gods by murder. He then explained himself, and told him he had received orders from Alexander to throw him into the sea; but he added, that he was resolved not to execute so cruel a commission, and was going to put him ashore. Such was the villany of the impostor; and Lucian, very lucky in escaping so great a danger, could never have justice done him against an enemy too well supported, and who was screened from all prosecution by Rutilian's protection.

The Divine vengeance did not suffer the crimes of this impostor to go unpunished even in this life; he died, eaten up with worms, from a shocking disorder and mortification in the foot, the leg, and the thigh.

The delusion lasted above twenty years; for Alexander gave out his oracles in the beginning of Aurelius's reign, whom he survived. It ended with the author of the imposture, and those whom he had formed or seduced, but who had not his abilities, made some fruitless attempts to keep up a farce too difficult for them.

BOOK XXI.

ANNALS OF COMMODUS.

A. R. 931. A. C. 180. L. Fulvius Bruttius Præsens II. Sextus Quintilius Condianus.

Commodus makes peace with the barbarians near the Danube, against the advice of the prudent ministers whom his father had left him, and returns to enjoy the pleasures of Rome. He triumphs a second time.

He takes the title of *Pius*.

A. R 932. A. C. 181. Commodus Augustus III. .....Burrhus.

It is believed that Burrhus, the consul for this year, was one of M. Aurelius's sons-in-law, brother-in-law to Commodus.

We find upon a medal of Commodus of this year the title of *Felix*. This prince is the first who took the titles of *Pius* and *Felix*, so very common on the medals of succeeding emperors.

A. R. 933. A. C. 182. .....Mamertinus. .....Rufus.

It appears that Mamertinus was likewise one of Aurelius's sons-in-law.

We may refer to this year a war against the Daci, or the Sarmati, in which Albinus and Niger acquired glory.

Commodus

COMMODUS AUGUSTUS IV. A. R. 934. A. C. 183.
M. AUFIDIUS VICTORINUS II.

War in Great Britain. Ulpius Marcellus obtains many advantages over the barbarians. Commodus takes the surname of *Britannicus*.

Conspiracy of Lucilla against the emperor her brother. She is confined in the island of Caprea, and put to death.

The empress Crispina, soon after, has the same fate.

Marcia becomes Commodus's concubine.

Tarruntius Paternus, pretorian prefect, who had been concerned in the conspiracy formed by Lucilla, is accused of forming a new one. He is condemned to die, with Salvius Julianus, the two Quintiliuses, and Sextus Condianus, son to the one and nephew to the other. Didius Julianus, afterwards emperor, is involved in this affair, and luckily extricates himself.

M. EGGIUS MARULLUS. A. R. 935. A. C. 184.
CN. PAPIRIUS ÆLIANUS.

Perennis, having remained pretorian prefect alone, upon the disgrace and ruin of Paternus, gains prodigious influence. Commodus neglecting business, that he may give himself up to pleasure.

Pertinax is banished into Liguria, where he was born.

.....MATERNUS. A. R. 936. A. C. 185.
.....BRADUA.

COMMODUS AUGUSTUS V. A. R. 937. A. C. 186.
M. ACILIUS GLABRIO II.

The fall of Perennis, who had conspired against his master. He perishes with all his family.

Commodus shows a disposition to reform, and to apply to business; but his good resolution lasts but thirty days, at the end of which the freedman Cleander gains the same ascendancy over him which Perennis had.

Pertinax is recalled from banishment, and sent into Great Britain, where he keeps the people and soldiers in subjection.

Antistius Burrhus, brother-in-law to the emperor, is put to death by Cleander's intrigues.

Cleander is made pretorian prefect with two others.

A. R. 938. A. C. 187. .....CRISPINUS.
.....ÆLIANUS.

Revolt and death of Maternus, the head of deserters and robbers.

Beginning of a plague which for a long time distresses Italy and Rome. Commodus retires to Laurentum.

A. R. 939. A. C. 188. C. ALLIUS FUSCIANUS II.
DULLIUS SILANUS II.

Commodus feigns to make an expedition into Africa, and demands money on that account.

A fire caused by thunder.

A. R. 940. A. C. 189. The two SILANI.

Twenty-five consuls in the course of this year; Severus was of the number.

Famine.

Ambitious designs of Cleander, who projects to raise himself to the sovereignty. The people rise against

against him. Commodus causes him to be put to death.

He takes off the head from the colossus of the sun, and puts on his own.

COMMODUS AUGUSTUS VI. A. R. 941.
PETRONIUS SEPTIMIANUS. A. C. 190.

Continuance of the plague. Poisoned needles.

Commodus becomes distrustful, and more cruel than ever. Six consular persons put to death at the same time. He puts to death Petronius Mamertinus, his brother-in-law, Annia Faustina, cousin-german to his father, and many other illustrious persons.

Death of Julius Alexander.

CASSIUS APRONIANUS, A. R. 942.
MAURICUS BRADUA. A. C. 191.

A fire, which consumes the temple of peace, part of the royal palace, where the archives were kept, the temple of Vesta, &c. The vestals with difficulty save the palladium.

COMMODUS AUGUSTUS VII. A. R. 943.
P. HELVIUS PERTINAX II. A. C. 192.

Games at the end of December, wherein Commodus shows himself with less modesty than ever, fighting with beasts and gladiators.

Marcia his concubine, Lætus his pretorian prefect, Eclectus his chamberlain, knowing he would put them to death the last night of December or the first of January, prevent him by giving him poison, and then strangling him.

His corpse is taken away by stealth from the palace, and put in the tomb of his fathers.

His memory is detested.

COMMODUS.

SECT. I.

The reign of Commodus beginning of the iron age. Commodus enters at once into the discharge of the imperial power. He hears at first the advice of his father's friends. His speech to the soldiers. Flatterers induce him to return quickly to Rome. He proposes it to the council. Pompeianus opposes it, and wishes to engage him to finish the war. Commodus is embarrassed. Imboldened by flatterers, he forms his resolution, treats with the barbarians, and returns to Rome. He is received with great joy. He triumphs over the Germans. He suffers his father's friends to govern for some time. As to himself, he is employed entirely in debauchery. He gives his confidence to Perennis, an interested and ambitious flatterer. Lucilla, his sister, forms a conspiracy against him. The conspiracy fails. The punishment of Lucilla and the other conspirators. Commodus's hatred of the senate. Paternus, pretorian prefect, accused of a new conspiracy. He perishes, with several of the principal persons in the senate. Didius Julianus absolved. Death of Crispina. Marcia, Commodus's concubine. Power and tyranny of Perennis. His ambitious projects and fall. Contradiction between Herodian and Dion in regard to Perennis. Commodus appears desirous of changing his conduct, and of applying to business. He returns to his effeminacy. Pertinax sent into Great Britain. War and seditions in that island. Character of Ulpius Marcellus, who commanded there with Pertinax. Pertinax, after experiencing

cing great difficulties from the soldiers, desires and obtains his recal. The bad and tyrannical government of Cleander, who succeeded Perennis in his power. He causes to be destroyed Antisthus Burrhus, brother-in-law to the emperor, and Arrius Antoninus. Insurrection of the people against Cleander. Commodus sacrifices his minister, who perishes with his children and a great number of his creatures. Alarms of Commodus. The danger he had run from the Marcomanni. Commodus's life spent in cruelty and debauchery. His cruelties. Of all the friends of Aurelius, three only spared by Commodus—Pompeianus, Pertinax, and Victorinus. His ignominious conduct. His foolish vanity. Calamities during his reign. Famine and fires. There were few wars, and the particulars not very material. Commodus universally despised and detested. His fears. New and last fits of his rage. A conspiracy formed against him. He dies, poisoned and strangled. Almost all his successors die, like him, a violent death. His memory is detested. He erected no public work. An useful establishment of which he was the author. He does not prosecute Christians. Pollux and Athenæus have written of his times.

Reign of Commodus beginning of the iron age.

DION, in going from the reign of Aurelius to that of Commodus, says, he falls from the golden to the iron age. Indeed, nothing is more opposite than the government of the son to that of the father; but, besides, the evils introduced by Commodus into the state were of long duration, and influenced the whole series of future events. We have seen that the good princes, for a long while, were attached to the support of the senate's authority, and to preserve the army in that obedience and submission which belongs to them. Commodus, through his ill conduct, becomes the object of hatred to the senate and all good men; applied himself

self to the army: he humbled the civil power, and increased the licentiousness of the soldiers, and, as he died without an heir, left the empire at their discretion. This situation of things, extremely like to that which followed the death of Nero, produced the same effects—bloody catastrophes of murdered emperors, revolutions upon revolutions, civil wars between several competitors for the empire.

But here is a melancholy difference, a calm did not succeed the storm; Rome had not, in the circumstances I speak of, the good fortune which saved her after the storms occasioned by the death of Nero; she did not find a Vespasian, whose prudence served her as a safe harbour, nor a succession of good princes, such as those who governed after Domitian. We shall find but few emperors deserving our esteem, and if there were any of good character, the soldiers could not bear them: such were the fatal effects of the too great power which the army assumed in the Roman government, and, from an uncertain succession, left to caprice and the fate of arms, so that he who was strongest had always the best right.

This was a fundamental error, as I have elsewhere observed, in the monarchy of the Cæsars, which had been founded in violence and war; but the effects of it were suspended for a time, first by a regard for the rights of the founder's family, and then by the prudence and wise administration of the emperors: this last curb was not so powerful as the first, from which Commodus having freed the soldiery, they immediately perceived their power, which had been now proved to them by repeated trials; their insolence took its full scope, which nothing was able to check, and it changed the Roman empire into a large band of robbers.

Commodus was very fit to give the signal to such a change: a prince without understanding, wicked, and vilely debauched; given up to indolence, and

in

in consequence of his laziness and incapacity, governed by unworthy ministers.

He had no occasion for any introductory ceremony, nor for the consent of the soldiers, and the deliberation of the senate, to be installed in the imperial dignity, to which he had been associated by his father. Commodus entered at once upon the exercise of the sovereign power, and soon showed what was to be expected from him by his hasty resolution to return to Rome, against the opinion of all his father's friends, leaving the war unfinished.

Commodus enters all at once upon the exercise of the sovereign power.

Aurelius had formed for him a council composed of the best and wisest senators, who had accompanied him in this expedition. The young emperor listened to their advice for some days, and, after attending to his father's obsequies, was prevailed upon to pronounce, before the army, assembled by his order, a speech which had been prepared for him, and which Herodian relates in these words:

He hears at first the counsels of his father's friends.

"My brave companions,

His speech to the soldiers.

"We have received a common loss, and I am "fully persuaded that your grief is not less than "mine; for, whilst my father lived, I had not any "advantage with him over you. He loved us all "as one man, and chose rather to call me his com-"panion in war than his son, preferring a society "in virtue to any natural connexion. In my in-"fancy he took me up in his arms, and recommend-"ed me to your fidelity; I therefore can build up-"on your affection from several titles. The old sol-"diers will consider me as their foster-child, and "as for those of my own age, I shall have a plea-"sure in treating them as the companions of my "military labours.

"I come not, like my predecessors, to the sove-"reignty in virtue of any rights acquired by acci-"dental circumstances; I alone, of all those who "have ever commanded you, was born in the pa-

"lace

" lace of my father and emperor: the sun saw me " destined to empire the moment I perceived its " light; how then should you not tenderly love one " who was not established, but born your prince!

" It is what my father expects from you. Ascend- " ed now to heaven, he pertakes of the lot and " glories of the gods, and has left to us the care of " worldly affairs: your duty is to complete his " work by finishing the remainder of the war, and " by carrying the authority of the Roman name as " far as the sea which washes the northern coasts " of Germany; you will find your glory in the exe- " cution of this plan, and at the same time you " will show your gratitude to the memory of our " common father, who from the heavens on high " hears what we speak, and sees what we do: what " a happiness is it for you to have so respectable a " witness of your glorious deeds! The successes " which you obtained under his command were " ascribed to his wisdom, and to the orders by which " he directed your arms: it will not be the same " with what you do under me, a young and a new " emperor; the whole honour will be yours; all " will be owing to your fidelity and to your courage. " You will crown my youth with glory and majesty " by your brave exploits, and the barbarians, van- " quished in the beginning of a new government, " will learn to drop, for the present, the false con- " fidence which my weak age inspires them with, " and to dread for the future from an appearance " of what is past."

To this flattering speech Commodus added the customary largesses at the beginning of a reign, and he did them magnificently.

Hitherto all was commendable. Those whom his father had given him for counsellors, and in some measure for tutors, governed the empire under his authority and in his name: they never left him; they

they accustomed him to judge of the affairs; and they so divided his day, that the greatest part of it was taken up with serious matters, allowing him, however, time for the relaxations necessary to a young prince.

This manner of life soon appeared to Commodus too troublesome and busy; he grew weary of hearing such rigid counsellors, and he fondly gave ear to flatterers, and to servants of the court who had too much influence over him from his infancy; men without honour or any sentiments, who had no other standard of happiness but the opportunities of gratifying their gluttony, and other the most shameful inclinations, and who frequently put him in mind of the delights of Rome, the shows, concerts, and the multitude of pleasures which that great city afforded. "What," say they to him, "are you doing "here upon the banks of the Danube, in a climate "of fogs and hoar-frosts, in an ungrateful and "barren soil? How long will you drink frozen wa-"ter, which must be broke with an axe, and brought "to you in solid pieces, whilst your happy subjects "enjoy hot baths, running springs, with the sweet "temperate air and fertility of Italy?"

Flatterers engage him to return quickly to Rome.

These discourses but too well agreed with Commodus's taste not to make a deep impression: he calls a council, and, concealing the true motives of his resolution, he declares that the love of his country recals him to Rome; that besides, his own safety requires his return; and that it was to be feared lest some of the great men should take the opportunity of his absence to take possession of the palace and the empire, and might find, in the immense number of the inhabitants of the capital, a force sufficient to make themselves formidable.

He proposes it to the council.

None of those who were present were dupes to the weak pretences the new emperor alleged; all immediately saw the true reasons which determined him, and stood astonished, motionless, with their eyes

Pompeianus opposes it, and wishes to engage him to finish the war.

eyes on the ground, expressing their disapprobation by the sadness of their looks Pompeianus, son-in-law of Aurelius, and brother-in-law to Commodus, and besides venerable for his age, ventured to speak what all the rest thought, but durst not utter.

"My son and my master," says he, "I think it "extremely natural for you to wish to see again "your native country, we ourselves have the same "desire; but the affairs of this country, very im- "portant and very pressing, are an obstacle which "stops us: you will have sufficient time for enjoy- "ing what makes you now regret your absence "from Rome; you run no hazard by deferring "your departure; on the contrary, to abandon a "war that is begun, is both dishonourable and dan- "gerous; it is to be feared we shall inspire the bar- "barians with confidence, who will consider our re- "treat not as proceeding from a desire to return to "Italy, but as a flight, and a demonstration of fear. "How much more glorious is it for you to subdue "your enemies, to extend the bounds of the em- "pire to the ocean, and to return afterwards in "triumph, bringing along with you in chains the "barbarous kings and princes who dared to re- "sist you! It was thus that the ancient Romans "acquired immortal fame; besides, you have no "reason to fear that a party should be formed "against you in Rome; you have with you the "chiefs of the senate, the most powerful troops of "the empire surround and defend you, your trea- "sury attends you, and the memory of your fa- "ther secures you the fidelity and attachment of "all those who ought to obey you."

Commodus is embarrassed.

This remonstrance of Pompeianus embarrassed Commodus; he respected the age and virtue of his brother-in law; he could make no reasonable reply to what he said, and he had not yet learned to defy reason and authority united together; on the other hand, he would not quit a resolution dictated by the love

love of pleasure; he therefore answered, that he would consider of what had been represented to him.

The flatterers returned to the charge; they encouraged him to set himself above those proud masters who wanted to domineer over him; and Commodus, without acquainting his council with it, made ready for his departure.

Imboldened by flatterers, he takes his resolution, treats with the barbarians, and returns to Rome. Dio.

He concluded treaties with the barbarians, whom it was not easy to subdue. The Marcomanni were in want of provisions and of troops; the losses they suffered in several battles, and the ravaging of their lands, had rendered them so weak, that they could no longer support the war, and had no resources but in a peace. Commodus granted it almost upon the same terms his father had imposed upon them; he required that they should give hostages, deliver up the prisoners, pay an annual tribute of a certain quantity of corn, and furnish him with such a number of auxiliary troops; he forbade their assembling oftener than once a month, and that in a particular place, and in presence of a Roman centurion; he forbade them making war with the Jazyges and Vandals: upon these terms he abandoned the forts that were built in their countries, and brought away the garrisons. Thus he renounced a conquest that was far advanced; he deprived the Romans of the glory they so highly valued of extending their empire; and what completed the ignominy of this peace was, that he purchased it with large distributions of money to nations ready to receive his yoke. Herod.

He negotiated in the same manner, and with the same spirit, with the Burii, who inhabit about the sources of the Oder and the Vistula. One remarkable clause of the treaty he made with them was, that he required their leaving between them and the Daci forty furlongs of desert country, without habitation or culture. Dio

In

In fine, a body of twelve thousand Daci, who, driven from their own country, might be a considerable re-enforcement to the neighbouring nations in case they should attempt to revolt, were engaged by Sabinianus, one of the generals whom Commodus trusted, to submit themselves to the empire, on condition of some lands which were given them in the Roman Dacia.

Herod. All these different negotiations being finished in a short time, Commodus, free of all care, and reckoning he had pacified and secured the country on the banks of the Danube, thought only of a speedy return, and without advising with any body, he publicly declared his departure. This order caused a commotion in the army; the example of the prince instilled into the hearts of the soldiers a desire of removing, like him, from a severe climate, and to go and seek repose and pleasure in Italy. Herodian, who informs us of this disposition of the army, does not acquaint us with the consequences; but undoubtedly the legions appointed for the security of Pannonia and the neighbouring provinces must have remained there; Commodus only carried away with him the pretorian cohorts, and the troops which had followed his father to the war.

Though this departure was precipitate, indecent, and resolved on contrary to the advice of the wisest heads, yet the favour of a young prince is such, that wherever he passed on his return, Commodus was received with warm and sincere acclamations of joy; they loved the son of Aurelius, they promised themselves a thousand blessings, and the continuance of public felicity; when he came near Rome, the senate in a body, and the whole multitude of inhabitants, came out to meet him, carrying branches of laurel, crowned with flowers; every external motive concurred in gaining their hearts; his noble birth, an uncommon advantage in Roman emperors, the graces of youth, and a good mien; his person was well

He is received with joy.

well made, his countenance charming, eyes full of fire, and a fine head of hair: every one, therefore, emulously boasted of a prince born to the purple, whose amiable youth seemed to proclaim nothing but mirth and diversions; they made fervent prayers for his prosperity, and covered him with flowers and garlands; it was amidst these proofs of public joy that Commodus entered Rome.

All this joy was very vain, and the whole preceding conduct of the prince sufficed to obviate their error; he showed in his triumph that he was not changed; for he triumphed for the Germans, though he had ill deserved that honour; and in so august a ceremony, he placed in his chariot one Saoterus, a vile wretched companion of his shameful debaucheries, and turned continually to him to kiss him; in this manner he ascended the capitol, visited some other temples, and then thanked the senate and the troops which had remained in the city for their fidelity to him in his absence. In the speech which he made to the senate, he discovered his want of genius by his many childish and low bravadoes; he particularly cited, as a great exploit, the assistance he had given his father in pulling him out of a heap of mud into which he had seen him fall. The ceremony of the triumph was performed the twenty-second of October.

He triumphs for his victories over the Germans.

Lamprid. Comm. c. 3.

Herod.

Lamprid. Comm. 2.

Herodian relates, that Commodus, upon his return to Rome, left for a few years the government of the state in the hands of the council which his father had given him. It is undoubtedly to this time we are to refer the only good action history ascribes to Commodus: one Manilius, who had been secretary to the rebel Cassius, being seized, promised to make great discoveries, and to furnish proofs for the conviction of many criminals. Commodus did not listen to him, but caused all his papers to be thrown in the fire. From this act of clemency it is easy to observe the spirit of Aurelius still

He lets, for some time, the friends of his father govern.

still lived in his friends after his death. Commodus, probably, had no other share in it than what was owing to his indolence, which made him leave the decision of all affairs to his council; for, as for him, he was entirely immersed, I will not say in pleasure, but in the licentiousness of the most shocking debaucheries. The sensible reader will easily dispense with my describing what would offend his modesty; only, that I may observe the law of history, I will relate, that Commodus debauched all his sisters; that he spent his life in a seraglio of six hundred victims of prostitution of both sexes; and that there is no species of debauchery which he was not proud to boast of.

As for him, he employs himself entirely in debauchery.

His passion for shedding blood did not fail to show itself amidst his infamous voluptuousness; he had a pleasure in killing victims, and in dressing himself like the underling officers whom custom appointed for such functions; he fought with gladiators, and, with equal cowardice and cruelty, used in these combats a sword well sharpened, whilst his adversaries had nothing but foils with leaden points.

He shows his bloody disposition.

Aurel. Vict.

A conduct so mean could not but bring upon him the contempt of every man of honour in Rome, and he took care to add hatred to it, by giving himself up to the wicked counsels of an interested and ambitious flatterer, who wanted to raise his fortune upon the ruin of the true friends whom Aurelius had left to his son.

He gives his confidence to Perennis, an interested and ambitious flatterer.

Herod. Lamprid. 4. Dio.

Perennis, (the name of his favourite,) a native of Italy, having acquired some reputation in the service, had been made pretorian prefect by Commodus, and colleague to Tarruntius Paternus, who was chosen to the same office by Aurelius. The new pretorian prefect studied to flatter the young prince's violent passion for pleasure; he freed him from all trouble of business, taking upon himself the whole weight of the government; by this means he gained the confidence of Commodus, and without loss of time laboured to instil into him a jealousy and

and hatred of the severity of his old ministers, who exhorted him continually to take upon himself the management of his affairs, and to employ himself in matters becoming an emperor. He succeeded without trouble with an easy and indolent prince, and engrossed him entirely. His scheme was perceived to tend to the destruction of those whom he had deprived of the prince's friendship, and that with an equal passion for riches, power, and honour; he proposed, by unjust confiscations, to enrich himself with their spoils.

His sister Lucilla forms a conspiracy against him.

All the old court was alarmed, and Lucilla, Commodus's sister, came and joined the intrigues of a woman to the general discontent against a bad government. She had been first married (as we have seen) to L. Verus, and though her second husband Pompeianus was of a very inferior rank, she had held, by an express concession of her father, all the honours of imperial dignity. She had the title of Augusta, the fire* was carried before her, and, after the death of her mother Faustina, she was for some time the first princess of the court. Commodus's marriage deprived her of this, and she was under a necessity to give place to Crispina the reigning empress, and this was to her the leaven of malice and ill-will against her brother. In order to revenge this pretended injury, she did not address herself to her husband Pompeianus, whom she did not love, and knew to be faithful to Commodus; she intrusted her griefs to Quadratus, a young senator, with whom she had otherwise very suspicious connexions; for, being a daughter worthy of Faustina, she trod in her mother's steps. Quadratus suffered himself to be blinded with the hopes of the sovereign rank,

* Herodian speaks in more places than one of fire carried by way of honour before the Roman emperors and empresses. It is a wonder so singular a practice is attested only by one writer. We may see what Justus Lipsius, in his commentary upon Tacitus, has said. *Ann. l.* 1. *c.* 7.

he found many senators willing to enter into his views, and to deliver the empire from the ignominious yoke of Commodus. The pretorian prefect Tarruntius Paternus strengthened the conspiracy with all the power of his office; and Quintianus*, a young senator, who had free access to the prince's person, because he was of his parties of pleasure, undertook the execution of it. Quadratus thought, when Commodus was killed, to show himself, and to put an end to the enterprise with his largesses.

The conspiracy fails.

The plot was very near succeeding, and, if it failed, it was only through his indiscretion who was to strike the first stroke. When Commodus came into the theatre through a dark passage, Quintianus comes up to him, draws his sword, and calls out to him, "Behold what the senate sends you." This threatening put the prince upon his guard, and the soldiers who attended him seized Quintianus, disarmed him, and brought him away prisoner.

The punishment of Lucilla and her conspirators.

Perennis, to whose designs this event was favourable, gladly undertook the bringing of the conspiracy to light. The chiefs were immediately discovered. Quadratus's foolish hopes cost him his head. Quintianus could not be spared. Lucilla was banished to the island of Caprea, and soon after put

* Dion, who came to Rome in the reign of Commodus, and who probably was there at the time of the facts I am relating, names, instead of Quintianus, one Claudius Pompeianus, who, he pretends, was son in-law to Lucilla, and had an incestuous correspondence with her. Herodian, whom I have followed, lived at the same time. It is easier to be surprised at this contrariety between two contemporary writers than to decide which of the two is to be preferred. Dion was higher in dignity, and consequently had better opportunities of information. But we have only extracts of his history, which may not be made with judgment or attention; on the contrary, Herodian's work is complete. Besides, his recital is more of a piece, better connected, and with more circumstances. These considerations determined me in favour of Herodian, without pretending to direct the judgment of others.

put to death. Most of the accomplices met the same fate, and suffered the just punishment of an attempt equally rash and criminal. But, most unfortunately, Quintianus's words made a deep impression on Commodus's memory, and left a wound in his heart which was never cured. He always considered the senate as an enemy of his person and life; and this fatal belief, assisted and incited by Perennis's instigations, made him shed streams of illustrious and innocent blood. Commodus's hatred of the senate.

Paternus had not been named among the accomplices of the conspiracy, and Commodus for some time did not know the part which this pretorian prefect had taken in it. A bold stroke, which this same Paternus ventured to make in so dangerous a situation, occasioned his ruin. He could not bear the influence which the infamous Saoterus had acquired over the prince by the most scandalous methods, and caused the wretch to be assassinated by the hands of Cleander the freedman, who became afterwards more powerful, and much more dangerous to the empire, than Saoterus. Commodus was enraged at it; the plot formed against his person had not provoked him more. Believing it, however, necessary to keep fair with Paternus, he disguised his project of vengeance under a seeming desire to honour him more. He made him senator, and gave him consular honours, in order to have a pretence for taking from him the office of pretorian prefect, which could only be enjoyed by a Roman knight. Paternus's enemies, seeing him in disgrace, improved the opportunity to complete his ruin. They collected all the proofs which rendered him justly suspected of having entered into Lucilla's conspiracy, and of having afterwards employed the power his office gave him to save several of the accomplices. Paternus, pretorian prefect, accused of a new conspiracy. Dio. ap. Val. Lamprid.

Commodus, being determined to sacrifice him to his resentment, was not contented with one victim; he wished to strike off several illustrious heads with Dio. ap. Val.

one blow, and so satisfy his bloody enmity to the senate. Paternus was charged with a new conspiracy formed with Salvius Julianus, grandson of the author of the perpetual edict, which we mentioned in the reign of Adrian, a person valuable for his merit and learning, and who, having gone through the higher dignities, and seen himself at the head of a great and powerful army, when Aurelius died, had made no attempt contrary to his duty and allegiance to his prince. There was a treaty of marriage between Salvius's son and Paternus's daughter, and it was alleged that this alliance concealed under it a design to raise Salvius to the empire. They both fell under this false accusation and lost their lives.

He perishes with several of the senate.

As a conspiracy cannot be formed without the concurrence of many, there were given them for accomplices persons of dignity and character, and some ladies of the best quality in Rome. Almost all of them perished by the sword, or were sent into banishment. Among the banished I observed two consuls in office, but deputed ones: Emilius Junctus and Atilius Severus*. Among those who suffered death, the most deserving of notice are the two Quintilii, brothers, whom I mentioned in the reign of Aurelius; as they had lived in perfect union, so they died in the same, being both strangled together. Sextus Condianus, son to the one and nephew to the other, was in Syria when he heard the same sentence of death passed upon him. He concealed himself, wandered about a long time, and pursued into his several retreats, occasioned the ruin of many who had offered him an asylum; at last he died without its being known in what manner; but he was seen no more, and an impostor, who, after the death of Commodus, wished to usurp Condianus's name, in order to get possession of his great fortune, was convicted of the cheat.

Didius

* I say deputed, and not ordinary consuls, because their names are not in the annals.

Didius Julianus, nephew to Salvius, was involved in the affair with his uncle; but, when the ferment was over, and Commodus, wearied with executions, began to fear the hatred which might result from thence, he was absolved, and his accuser condemned. It had been happy for Didius if the danger he then incurred had cured him for ever of his ambition to reign. Didius Julianus absolved. Spart. Dio. 1.

About the same time, the empress Crispina, being guilty of adultery, was transported into the island of Caprea, and soon after put to death by order of Commodus. Death of Crispina. Dio.

This prince took a concubine from the family of an enemy. Marcia, who had been kept by Quadratus, passed directly to the imperial palace, and maintained herself in favour till the death of Commodus, in which she had a great hand. Xiphilinus relates that she protected the Christians, who indeed enjoyed great peace under all this reign. He has not informed us of the motives which could determine such a woman to employ her credit for persons so very unlike herself. Marcia concubine to Commodus.

Perennis being the only pretorian prefect by the death of Paternus, and having to do with a prince who was averse to business, and breathed nothing but pleasure, made the whole authority of the government to centre in himself, and to degenerate into the most shocking tyranny. He overturned all the laws, he rid himself of all those whom he suspected, killing some, banishing others, and appropriating to himself the spoils of all. No rank, no condition, was secure against his cruel avarice; not only the senators, but the rich provincials, and even the women, whose opulency tempted his avarice, suffered from false accusations; and, what would appear incredible, if tyranny knew any bounds, persons against whom they could devise nothing criminal, they prosecuted for having had a desire to nominate Commodus their heir, and making him wait too long for their succession. Perennis more Power and tyranny of Perennis. His projects and his fall. Herod. Lamp. 5, 6.

Capit. Pertin. c. 3. particularly studied how to extirpate the ancient friends of Aurelius, or at least to drive them from court. Pertinax, in the number of the last, was banished into Liguria. He there passed three whole years in his father's pitiful farm.

Herod. Commodus, thus deprived, by his perfidious minister, of all his good and faithful servants, of all those who were capable of a sincere affection for him, became a prey without any defence; and Perennis, whose ambition aspired to the throne, thought he had but one step more to make in order to ascend it. Whilst he was disposing of every thing at Rome with absolute power, procuring to himself creatures by his gifts, and silencing all those by fear whom he could not gain, he had invested his son*, who was still very young, with the command of the armies of Illyria; and he reckoned that, after he had put Commodus to death, which appeared to him very easy, the troops commanded by his son would establish him in full and lasting possession of the sovereign power.

His criminal designs were brought to light in a very odd manner: Whilst the emperor was present at the Capitoline games, established (as I have before observed) by Domitian, a Cynic philosopher, with the staff and the bag, presents himself amidst the assembly, mounts the theatre, and, with a motion of his hand, imposing silence upon the crowd of spectators, he addresses these words to Commodus:

"This is not the time for you to amuse yourself "with games, or to celebrate feasts; Perennis's "sword threatens your head, and if you do not take "precautions, against a danger which is not ap- "proaching, but present, you will perish in the in- "stant you least expect it. Here Perennis is assem- "bling forces and amassing money against you; "his

* Herodian says his sons, in the plural; but afterwards he mentions but one as commander-in-chief. The younger was probably his brother's lieutenant.

" his son is corrupting the armies of Illyria, which " he commands; if you do not prevent them, you " are a dead man."

Commodus was confounded; the bystanders, who thought this discourse very probable, pretended, however, not to believe it. Perennis, who was present, carried it off by his impudence, and treating the philosopher as a madman, caused him to be taken and burnt alive. Such was the reward the unfortunate Cynic received for his faithful but inconsiderate advice.

Meantime the stroke was struck; though Commodus had not prevented his punishment who endeavoured to instil into him suspicions of his minister, there still remained a cloud upon his mind. Perennis's enemies, perceiving it, strengthened his jealousy; he had many; proud and insolent, as favourites generally are, he was become odious to all the court. The prince, struck with the discourses which rung in his ears from all quarters, received at the same time evident and convincing proofs of the infidelity of his pretorian prefect. Some soldiers of the army of Illyria, having escaped from the camp, brought him money struck by the order of Perennis's son, with the impression of his face and his name.

This was undoubtedly sufficient to destroy him. A military deputation sent against him completed his ruin: fifteen hundred soldiers arrived at Rome, charged by the army of Great Britain, to which they belonged, to complain of the tyranny exercised by Perennis over the troops; to accuse him of intrigues for making his son emperor, and consequently to desire his punishment and death. Commodus at last opened his eyes; Perennis was declared an enemy of the public, and given up to the soldiers, who abused him a thousand ways, and cut him in pieces. His wife, his sister, his two sons, one of whom commanded the army of Illyria, and the other Dio. and Lamprid.

had a place of importance there, shared his unhappy fate; and this family, a little before so very powerful, was totally destroyed in an instant. Perennis could not have been pretorian prefect above three years.

Contradiction between Herodian and Dion in regard to Perennis.

In what I have related of his conduct I have preferred the authority of Herodian, who is followed by Lampridius, to that of Dion. This last author loads the favourite with praises, whom the others paint in the blackest colours; he only upbraids him for being the occasion of his colleague Paternus's ruin, in order to have the sole possession of the office of pretorian prefect; in other respects he commends him as a disinterested and incorruptible minister, as having done nothing for himself, as the support of prince and state; and he blames Commodus for basely giving him up to the seditious clamours of the soldiers. It is, however, difficult to suppose that Herodian invented the facts he mentions; and Dion might have had some particular reason for flattering the memory of Perennis; whatever his motive might be, his testimony has not appeared to Tillemont (though followed by him) to deserve the preference.

Commodus seems desirous of changing his conduct, and to apply to business. Lamprid. 6. Herod. and Dio.

The danger which Commodus had run from the ambitious enterprise of Perennis awakened him a little out of his lethargy; for whilst this favourite's ministry lasted, the prince relied entirely upon him, seeing only with Perennis's eyes, and informing himself of nothing but what the pretorian prefect was pleased to acquaint him with; he even appeared but little in public, after Quintianus's attempt upon his person: shut up in the palace, he divided his whole time between debauchery and his contemptible combats with gladiators and beasts; there he succeeded, joining art with great bodily strength. It is related that he killed five sea-horses at once, two elephants in two several days, a rhinoceros, an animal partly like a camel and partly a panther; he shot

shot so dexterously, that one day at a show, observing a panther who darted against an unhappy wretch destined to fight him, with an arrow he instantly killed the beast, without hurting the man. It was by these mean exploits that he desired to shine, and he valued himself upon them, as a heroism which rendered him equal to Hercules and Cæsar. Perennis had humoured him in this taste, so favourable to the ambition of a minister, who considers his own interest more than his master's glory.

The noise made by the audacious projects of this pretorian prefect broke the charm (as I have said) for a little time; Commodus seemed to rouse out of his lethargy; he declared he would apply to business; he repaired several acts of injustice done by Perennis; he determined not to give the office of pretorian prefect to one man, but to divide it between two colleagues, in order to lessen the power, and make it less formidable. But these were but the feeble efforts of a man overcome with sleep, and who, after shaking himself a little, returns to it again: Commodus's reformation lasted only thirty days, at the end of which he fell into his effeminacy again, and suffered Cleander, who was only a freedman, to have the same influence over him as Perennis had enjoyed.

He returns to his effeminacy.

During the lucid interval which this half-cured phrenzy of Commodus had left him, this prince did justice to Pertinax; he recalled him from the banishment wherein Perennis had kept him three years, and sent him to command the legions of Great Britain. Pertinax had spent his leisure time in building in his native place; and not being in the least ashamed of the lowness of his first state, amidst the grand edifices he had raised, he preserved his father's cottage just as it was, without any alteration. Being recalled to public affairs, he went to restore peace to a province, then in confusion from the seditious spirit which prevailed in the Roman army.

Pertinax sent into Great Britain. Wars and seditions in that island.

These

These troubles had been preceded by commotions on the part of the barbarians; the war was kindled in Great Britain in the beginning of Commodus's reign, and it was the most considerable in his time; we know but little of the particulars. Dion's abridger only informs us, that the Britons passed the wall which ran across the island from one sea to the other, laid waste the Roman province, conquered a Roman general who marched to oppose them, and cut his army in pieces. Ulpius Marcellus was sent from Rome to put a stop to the incursions of the barbarians; he succeeded, and quelled their insolence by the repeated advantages he gained over them. This is all we know of his exploits, but his character is better known to us.

Character of Ulpius Marcellus, who commanded before Pertinax.

This warrior, formed in the school of Aurelius, imitated and even surpassed him in plainness, frugality, and strict discipline; he was persuaded that it was hardly allowable for a general to sleep; he therefore gave little time for rest, and kept all his officers under him watchful and alert, giving them in the evening orders for all the different hours of the night; he ate no more than was necessary to keep him alive, and what Dion relates of him will undoubtedly appear incredible to many. Ulpius, as the historian reports, when he was in Great Britain, used to bring his bread from Rome, not that he could not eat what was made in the province, but in order to have it so hard that he should be under a necessity of eating it only from absolute hunger: if this be not true, at least it supposes, in the person to whom it is ascribed, a remarkable severity of manners. By declaring war against all effeminacy and pleasure, Ulpius had cut up by the root the desire of riches; accordingly he was perfectly disinterested, and of incorruptible integrity; but he showed himself severe to others as well as himself, and consequently little qualified to be loved.

The

The state was nevertheless well served by him, and the fame of his successes and virtue brought upon him Commodus's hatred: as a recompence for his service, he saw himself in danger of being undone by false accusations; he escaped, however, but after what manner we cannot say, and was suffered to live.

Pertinax, after great difficulties from the soldiers, desires and obtains a recal. Capit. Pertin. 3.

Ulpius had now reduced the northern barbarians to their duty, and settled the province in peace with their enemies; had he continued there, he would likewise have maintained obedience among the troops; but, after he was recalled, the tranquillity which by his care had been re-established from without, was succeeded with troubles and seditions from within. We have seen how far the legions of Great Britain carried their boldness against Perennis; that minister's death did not allay their complaints, the government was despised and hated, and Pertinax being sent to redress the evil, found their spirits in great fermentation; the soldiers wanted a change of emperor; and had their new commander agreed to come into their schemes, he had been proclaimed Augustus. Pertinax preserved his allegiance to his prince; he checked the seditions even at the peril of his life, for there was one so furious, that many were killed, and he himself remained for dead on the place; he recovered, reassumed his authority, and severely punished the guilty; but, weary of so dangerous an employment, and seeing it was impossible to restore to their ancient discipline troops corrupted with pride and insolence, he desired to be recalled, and obtained his request; upon his return to Italy, he was appointed superintendent of provisions.

Bad and tyrannical government of Cleander, who succeeds to the power of Perennis.

The insolence of the soldiers was undoubtedly owing to the faults of the government; for Cleander, who succeeded (as I have said) to the power of Perennis, and who had even contributed to the ruin of that minister, was himself still more vicious than

Dio. and Herod. l. 1. and Lamp. Comm. 6.

than the person he had destroyed; he is a famous instance of what we call the sport of fortune.

A Phrygian by birth, and a slave, he was sold in his own country, and brought to Rome to do the meanest offices; being admitted into the palace, and become the emperor's slave, he was agreeable to Commodus when a child, by a likeness in their dispositions: this beginning of favour he carefully cherished; and the young prince, after his father's death, gave him his freedom, appointed him his first chamberlain, and gave him in marriage Damostratia, one of his concubines. Cleander was a party in all Commodus's pleasures, or, to speak more justly, in all his debaucheries; and by this means having gained his confidence, he was for some time Perennis's rival; and at last, supported with the faction of the freedmen of the palace, he wrought his destruction. Heir to his power, he abused it with all the insolence of a mean soul, and introduced in his ministry all the vices of slaves; he put every thing to sale, the places of senators, the command of armies, the government of provinces, and intendancies, for which he was well paid. There were purchasers, whom the rage of ambition engaged to strip themselves of every thing they had to become senators: of this number was Julius Solo, an obscure person, of whom it was said, that by the confiscation of his effects he had got himself banished into the senate; neither merit nor birth were of any account; freedmen were made senators, and even put into the rank of patricians, a title till then reserved for the first families of Rome. Cleander, to increase his gains, multiplied offices, and named, what had never been seen before, twenty-five consuls for one year. He regarded neither laws nor precedents; whoever had money to give was sure to be absolved whatever crime he had committed, or indemnified in case he had been already condemned, and frequently too with additional dignity and

and splendour. No citizen could be secure of his life or fortune, in case he had a rich enemy, who would purchase his destruction. Condemnation to banishment, to death, to different kinds of punishments, confiscation, deprivation of burial, all was exposed to sale, nothing was thought of but the price. The favourite, by this cruel and abominable traffic, amassed immense treasures: and to secure the possession of the greater part of his prey, he shared it with the emperor's concubines, and even with the emperor himself. He was, indeed, magnificent in the use of his riches, raising sumptuous buildings, not only for his own use, but for the convenience and decoration of several cities. He built hot baths at Rome, which he called Commodian, from his master's name. Lamprid. 14. Lamprid. 17.

He did not at first take the office of pretorian prefect, too unsuitable to his mean condition, but he paved himself a way to it by degrading it, and making it contemptible by frequent changes. He made and unmade pretorian prefects at his pleasure; he had one for five days, another for six hours; at last, when Cleander thought he had brought this powerful office within his reach, he possessed himself of it, taking two colleagues, who were entirely his creatures; then, for the first time, were seen three pretorian prefects. Lamprid. 6.

Before Cleander had got to this high rank, one of the principal senators, brother-in-law to Commodus, Antistius Burrhus, ventured to declare against the scandalous proceedings of this insolent freedman, and to complain to the emperor of the abuse of his authority and name. Cleander returned the charge against the accuser; and accused him of ambitious projects, and with a formed design of usurping the throne. Antistius fell, and was put to death, and brought those into the same misfortune who had the courage to undertake his defence. Another victim to the tyranny of Cleander, no less illustrious, He causes Antistius Burrhus, brother in-law to the emperor, to be put to death, and Arrius Antoninus.

lustrious, was Arrius Antoninus, whose name seems to carry in it some relation with Commodus*; he was sacrificed by the pretorian prefect to the resentment of Attalus, whom he had condemned when proconsul of Asia.

Capit. Pertin. 3. I am sorry to find in Capitolinus that Pertinax was suspected to be concerned in those odious proceedings against these two senators, so valuable for their virtue and high rank; but it is only suspicion, which we may believe groundless.

Insurrection of the people against Cleander. Lamp. 7. Dio. & Herod. Arrius Antoninus was so esteemed at Rome, that Lampridius attributes the insurrection of the people, which produced Cleander's fall, to their resentment for his cruel and unjust death. Dion and Herodian assign a violent famine for the cause of this insurrection, a thing which operates very differently upon the minds of the multitude. These two accounts may be reconciled: it is very possible that two different motives concurred to the same effect; however it be, a contagious distemper, which had preceded and ravaged Italy and Rome for a long time, produced a famine as its natural consequence, and the wickedness of men increased the calamity. Here our two authors differ; according to Dion, it was the overseer of provisions, Papirius Dionysius, who, instead of redressing the evil, endeavoured to aggravate it, with a design to ruin Cleander, by making the hatred for the public calamity to fall upon him: Herodian charges Cleander alone with the whole; he says that this favourite, intoxicated with his fortune, gave full scope to his desires, and seeing none but the emperor above him, projected to dethrone him, and usurp his place; that, with this view, having amassed a great quantity of money and corn,

* He descended, probably, as Tillemont observes, from Arrius Antoninus, grandfather by the mother to the emperor Antoninus, who was great-grandfather to Commodus by adoption.

corn, he designedly increased the dearness and scarcity of provisions, that so the assistance which he gave by his largesses might be better received, and gain him at once the public affection

If he had such a thought, it did not succeed: the people, who had long hated him for his insatiable avarice, imputed to him the evils they suffered: in the theatres, and at the games, there were threatening clamours raised against the minister who starved the city of Rome. Dion relates, upon this occasion, an odd scene, which he dresses up as a miracle, but whose springs are easily guessed at; he tells us, that, in a race of chariots in the circus, a number of children advanced, with a young girl at their head, very tall, with a fierce and bold look; it was thought, he adds, by the event which followed, that it must be some demon or genius; it was much more natural to think, and Dion should have said it, that some artful person had contrived this scene to stir up the people, who were already discontented, and disposed to sedition.

This choir of children raise their voice, and with loud acclamations wish a thousand prosperities to Commodus, with imprecations and curses against Cleander: this was a signal to the whole assembly; they repeat the same cries, they rise, they leave the show, and run in crowds to the place where Commodus kept himself shut up, not thinking of any thing but his pleasures, whilst the city was all in an uproar; it was a grand spacious house in one of the suburbs of Rome; it was not possible for the multitude to get at the emperor: Cleander, who beset all the avenues, prevented his being informed of what passed, and caused the pretorian cavalry to fall upon the unarmed mob, who wounded and killed several, and trampled others under their horses' feet; the people so cruelly used fled in disorder to the gates of the city, but did not surrender, and having received there a powerful re-enforcement by the junc-

tion

tion of the city cohorts, who from an old jealousy were disposed to take part against the pretorians; they renewed the combat, where the success was dubious, so that a great many fell on both sides.

Commodus sacrificeshis minister, whoperishes with his childrenand creatures.

In so great a calamity, whilst a kind of civil war overflowed Rome with blood, no man dared to acquaint Commodus of it, so much was the minister dreaded; at last, the extreme danger imboldened Fadilla, Commodus's sister, if we believe Herodian, or Marcia his concubine; if we choose rather to follow Dion, one or other of them, with dishevelled hair, and all the signs of the greatest consternation, came and threw herself at Commodus's feet, and represented to him the danger he was in, the ambitious and criminal designs of Cleander, and the necessity of sacrificing that worthless slave to the hatred of the people, and to his own safety. Terrified with the discourse either of Fadilla or Marcia, he instantly sent for Cleander, and caused his head to be cut off in his presence; his head was fixed on a pole, and exposed as a pleasant and agreeable sight to the provoked multitude. In a moment the tumult ceased, and the people were satisfied; the pretorians discovered that Cleander had made them fight his own quarrel against his master's intentions; all their aversions were turned against the family and creatures of the wicked minister; two sons, one of whom was still under age, and brought up by Commodus, were massacred; all his friends, all his connexions, and particularly a great many freedmen of the palace, were extirpated, and their bodies, after being abused a thousand ways, and dragged along the streets, were thrown into the common shores: the intendant of provisions was put to death some time after, by order of Commodus.

Alarms of Commodus.

This prince had been so intimidated by the insurrection of the people, and undoubtedly by his own conscience, which taught him how little he deserved to be loved, that he durst not, even after the sedi-

tion

tion was over, appear again in the city: it was necessary for those about him to encourage him to take the resolution of returning to the palace; he had no occasion to repent it. The people, being delivered from an odious minister, received their emperor with loud acclamations of joy, and gave him all possible marks of attachment and respect.

Indeed Commodus's alarms were not groundless: from the beginning of his reign he had heard of nothing but conspiracies; we have seen three real ones laid successively by his sister Lucilla, and his two ministers, Perennis and Cleander, not to mention those he had been made to fear without reason. In the interval between the two last, Herodian places the insurrections of a band of robbers, which likewise put Commodus in danger.

Danger he had run from Maternus, chief of the banditti.

Maternus, a common soldier and deserter, but of a determined resolution to undertake any thing, assembled at first some deserters like himself, with whom he carried on in Gaul the trade of a robber; their success brought them new associates; his gang increased gradually, and became at last an army. There was a necessity of making a regular war against them, and Niger, who afterwards disputed the empire with Severus, was employed to encounter so despicable an enemy, and he acquitted himself like a brave and able officer. Meantime Maternus, in spite of the losses he had suffered, augmented his forces, so as to form a design of killing Commodus, and to make himself emperor in his room.

Spart. Nig. 3.

Herod

He perceived that he could not succeed in such a design, if he showed himself openly; and as his art was equal to his courage, he formed an admirable plan: he divided his troops, and ordered them to go into Italy and to Rome in small parties, and went there himself; his scheme was to avail himself of the opportunity of the Cybeline festival, which was celebrating at Rome with great pomp, and

during which every one had the liberty of being disguised; he therefore resolved to take, for himself and followers, the dress and armour of the emperor's guards, to mix with them in a kind of solemn procession where Commodus was present, to come near his person, and to murder him.

The project contained nothing but what was very practicable; but some of those who first entered into it conceived a jealousy of their leader. They had hitherto considered themselves almost as his equals, and could not think of making him their master: they discovered the plot, Maternus was seized, with a great number of his accomplices, and they were all punished with death.

Cruelties and debaucheries divide Commodus's life.

So many successive dangers to which Commodus saw his life exposed, made him not only fearful but mistrustful, and consequently cruel to all those who had the misfortune to fall under his suspicion; he was already but too much inclined to these vices; but the circumstances strengthened, increased, and carried them to the greatest height. His general conduct after Cleander's death is thus painted by Herodian: Commodus, (says he,) from that moment suspected all the world, shedding rivers of blood, listening to every calumny, and refusing admittance to any person of character: his cruelties, adds the historian, gave no interruption to his pleasures and debaucheries, to which he was a slave. Every man of sense, who had but a tolerable share of polite literature, was to expect to be banished from the court as a dangerous enemy; actors of farces and obscene pantomimes governed the prince, whose whole employment consisted in driving chariots, and combating with beasts. His flatterers extolled these mean exercises as great and glorious exploits; thus cruelty on one hand, infamy, extravagance, and indecency on the other, composed the portrait of Commodus, and make the subject of the remaining part

of

of his history, which I shall relate so as not to offend the reader's modesty and my own.

In the room of Cleander he created two pretorian prefects, Julianus and Regillus, and soon after put them to death. He had, however, shown great marks of regard for Julianus; he kissed him instead of receiving his respects in the usual way, and called him *Father;* but, after he had disgraced him, by forcing him to dance before his concubines like a juggler, and to throw himself, by way of sport, into a fish-pond, he put him to death by the sword. In general, none of his pretorian prefects long enjoyed a post as dangerous as high; none continued in place above three years, and almost all of them lost their life with their office. His cruelties. Lamprid. Comm. 7. Dio.

Lampridius mentions several other illustrious victims to Commodus's cruelty; six consular persons at once, Petronius Mamertinus, brother-in-law to the emperor, and Antoninus, his nephew, and Anna Faustina, cousin-german to his father. He caused to be burned alive the children and descendants of Avidius Cassius, whom Aurelius had spared. At other times he employed poison, when he wanted to prevent too great a noise; and he was prompted to these barbarities, not by jealousies only and dark suspicions, but by his avarice, which had a great share in them. The revenues of the empire were not sufficient for his expenses; and, in order to support them, he ordered the death of many people of fortune, both men and women, that he might seize their effects. Vulcat. Avid. 13. Lamprid. Comm.

In what way soever his displeasure might be incurred, death was the certain consequence of the pretended offence. He condemned to the beasts those who were witty upon him. He applied this shocking punishment to the bare reading of Caligula's life penned by Suetonius. He had reason for interesting himself in the character of a prince he so much resembled. Of all the things in which

they were so much alike, the least material is that mentioned by Lampridius, that they were both born on the same day, the thirty-first of August.

Dion speaks of one Julius Alexander, a very robust man, and a good archer, who fought on horseback with a lion, and killed him with arrows. Commodus considered this brave man as a rival who sullied his glory, and determined to be rid of him; at least Dion alleges no other motive for Julius's death. It is true that Lampridius mentions a revolt, but that was the fashionable excuse for destroying all those the emperor hated. However that may be, the resolution was not so easily executed as taken. Julius Alexander was at Emerus, his native country, when he learned that soldiers were sent to kill him. He held himself ready, and, surprising them in the night in an ambuscade, slew them all. After the same manner he treated his enemies in the city, and immediately mounting a horse, he prepared to fly to the neighbouring barbarians. His criminal affection for a boy was the occasion of his fall; he wanted to carry him with him, and as the lad's weakness retarded his journey, his pursuers had time to overtake him. At their approach, seeing death unavoidable, he began by killing his companion, and then despatched himself.

Such were the bloody revenges which Commodus took for mere words, or for actions entirely innocent. He did more; it was, literally speaking, a diversion to him to kill and maim men. If he knew any one had declared he was weary of life, he took him at his word, and caused him, against his will, to be thrown down a precipice. He ordered a fat man's belly to be opened, to have the pleasure of seeing his entrails. By way of amusement, he deprived some of an eye, others of a leg, and afterwards he made his jests of them. He diverted himself with cutting off with a razor

Dio.

the

the noses and ears of the unfortunate officers of his household, whom he obliged to sit down, as if he intended to shave them. Sometimes he affected the surgeon, and, under pretence of letting blood, and opening a vein, he slashed the arms, and let out all the blood. Lamprid. 2.

I will conclude this shocking detail, which cannot fail of putting the reader out of all patience, with one device more, which surpasses all the rest. As he affected to be a rival to Hercules, he would, like that hero, fight with giants and monsters. For this purpose he assembled all those in the city who had lost the use of their legs by distemper or otherwise, and caused them to be wrapt up with clothes and linens below the knees, of such a length as to make them resemble the tails of dragons. He gave them spunges instead of stones for arms, and then rushing upon them, killed them all with a club. It would be hard to believe such a mixture of extravagance and cruelty, if it was not attested by Dion, an ocular witness. This historian observes, that he and all the spectators were under great fear, which is easily imagined. Dio. and Lamprid. 9

It will not be thought strange that this unworthy son of Aurelius should cause all his father's friends to be destroyed. It is rather to be wondered that three of them escaped his fury, Pompeianus, Pertinax, and Victorinus. Dion declares he cannot account for it. It is probable that the two first were very wise men, and careful to moderate the zeal of their virtue with a prudence which avoids to incense, though it disapproves. We have seen that Pompeianus, in particular, cherished and respected the memory of Aurelius in his son. He bore with what he could not prevent. He only abstained from going to the shows, where the emperor, his brother-in-law, disgraced himself by acting the infamous part of a gladiator; however, he sent his children there. We may judge that Pertinax go- Of all M. Aurelius's friends, three only spared by Commodus, Pompeianus, Pertinax, and Victorinus.

verned himself by the same principles, but Victorinus even braved the cruelty of Commodus, and the pride of his ministers.

He was of a steady and intrepid disposition, and when there were flying reports in the city, which threatened him with approaching death, he went to Perennis, who was then in favour. "I am informed," says he, "that the emperor and you intend to "take away my life. What is it you wait for? "Why do you delay? You may this very day execute the design you have formed." This boldness should naturally have hastened his ruin. Victorinus was, besides, a man of distinguished merit, and capable of giving umbrage. He had a talent for speaking, and was considered as the best orator of the age. Dion has preserved two instances of his resolution in command. When he was governor of Germany, knowing that his lieutenant-general was a greedy plunderer, he began by reproving him in private, and exhorting him to reform. This vice is one of those which are never cured, and Victorinus's representations were fruitless. Then he formed his resolution, and having assembled the army, he first caused himself to be summoned by the herald, and made oath that he never had and never would receive a present. He then ordered his lieutenant to be cited to take the same oath, and that officer not daring to be guilty of a perjury of which he could so easily be convicted, was immediately cashiered. After this, Victorinus was proconsul of Africa, and in that office he repeated the same example against one of his assessors who was infected with the same leprosy. He obliged him to embark in a ship which sailed from Africa, and brought him to Italy. He discharged likewise the office of governor of Rome, and acquitted himself so well, that a statue was erected in honour of his virtue. All this was more than sufficient

ficient to entitle him to the hatred of Commodus, and yet Victorinus died peaceably in his bed.

To finish this picture of Commodus, we must here add what relates to his debaucheries and shameful behaviour. I have said enough on the first head, and it is better to throw a veil over his indecencies than to expose them: so much I must observe, that he was so entirely lost to all sense of shame, and that he gloried in his own dishonour. Disgraceful meanness in his conduct.

He had always a silly passion for making a show of himself, either in driving of chariots, or in fighting with beasts, or as a gladiator. However, at first a spark of modesty induced him, if not to forbear from exercises so unbecoming his rank, at least to confine them to the palace. But at length he shook off all restraint, and made the public eye-witnesses of his shame. He frequently passed a considerable time in the schools, where the gladiators were trained. He went out with them, and appeared among them in the arena; he fought, was proclaimed conqueror, required the applause of the people and of the senate, and the gravest senators, however unwillingly, yielded to this wretched adulation. He exacted his salary as a gladiator, but with this difference, that he demanded a higher price than the rest; and, to complete his impudence, he endeavoured to perpetuate the remembrance of his ignominy. Every time that he did any thing mean, shameful, or cruel, or acted the gladiator, or master of a debauch, he ordered it should be registered in the journals which were kept of every thing remarkable that passed in the city. Hence it is that we know he fought three hundred and sixty-five times whilst his father was alive, and seven hundred and thirty-five times after his death, and that he gained a thousand victories in these disgraceful combats. He was so proud of them, that having appropriated to himself the colossus of the sun *, and taken off the head Herod. and Lamprid.

* Nero had raised that colossus for himself, and Vespasian had consecrated it to the sun.

to make way for his own; he ordered to be inscribed upon the basis, instead of the titles of sovereignty, that of *Conqueror of a thousand gladiators.*

Lamprid. 9. From the same meanness of taste, not, I think, from superstition, he devoted himself to the mysteries of Isis, and celebrated them with the priests of that Egyptian goddess. Like them he shaved his head, and with them carried the image of Anubis: and even in this religious ceremony, not forgetting his malevolent inclinations, he struck the litter which supported the statue in such a manner, that the mouth and teeth of the god-dog gave the ministers violent knocks on their shaven heads.

From the same meanness in his avaricious proceedings as in the rest of his conduct, Commodus upon his birth-day changed the customary presents into fixed and regular contributions. The senators of Rome, their wives and children, were taxed at two pieces of gold a head, worth fifty deniers. In the other cities, the senators were only rated at five deniers or drachms, which in our money may be worth fifty sous. On a particular occasion, when he wanted money, he feigned a desire to go into Africa, and, under that pretence, demanded the sums necessary for a great expedition. When he had got the money, he spent it in feasts of debauchery, and did not go, on a supposition that the senate and people could not bear his absence from Rome.

His foolish vanity. With all this meanness of manners, which loaded him with ignominy, Commodus was full of vanity, and fond of ostentatious titles, and he assumed a great number of them, which served only to make him extremely ridiculous, and which shows of how little value are all external decorations the appendage of fortune, and not of merit. The subscription of his letters to the senate, according to Dion, was thus, *The Emperor Cæsar Lucius Ælius Aurelius Commodus Augustus, the Pious, the Happy, the*

the Sarmatian, Maximus Germanicus, Britannicus, the Peace-maker of the World, the Invincible, the Roman Hercules Pontifex Maximus, enjoying the Tribunitial Power the eighteenth time, eight times Imperator, seven times Consul, Father of his Country. To the Consuls, the Pretors, the Tribunes of the People, and to the happy Commodian Senate, Health. Many of these titles want explanation, and it is necessary to understand them in order to form a more just and perfect notion of that ridiculous vanity which induced Commodus to assume them.

He might ascribe to himself the surname of Pius as hereditary, for his adoptive grandfather Titus Antoninus had borne it. That of Felix, or Happy, was renewed in his person, after the example of Sylla, hateful model, and whom no good prince would imitate. Commodus is the first who joined together these two titles, which he so little deserved. They were adopted by most of his successors on the medals which we commonly find of them.

Commodus took the titles of Sarmaticus, Germanicus, and Britannicus, from the victories of no great consequence which were obtained by his lieutenants over the nations these names relate to. It must be observed, that the title of Germanicus had been assumed by so many emperors, that the glory of it appeared common. It was therefore to be raised, and if I may be allowed the expression, to be new-coined with the epithet Maximus, as easy to be copied as the name itself.

I find no foundation in Commodus's reign for the title of Peace-maker of the Universe. The peace which he concluded after his father's death with the barbarians near the Danube was not honourable to the empire, and concerned only a part of the frontiers. That which the state enjoyed at home,

home was not of his procuring, but the effect of the valour and prudence of his predecessors, and by his cruelty he made it more bloody than war itself. The title of the Enemy of Mankind had suited him better than that of Peacemaker.

He assumed the title of Invincible, on account of his combats with beasts and gladiators. He succeeded there but too well, and nothing so much shows the meanness of his sentiments as the trophies he made of these shameful victories.

It was for the same reasons he called himself the Roman Hercules; imitator of the labours of Hercules, he believed he had a right to take the name and symbols of that god. He frequently appeared covered with a lion's skin, with a club in his hand, or rather he caused to be carried before him these glorious marks of his divinity; and he was so proud of them, that even when he was not present at the games, he ordered them to be placed upon the throne appointed for him. What makes it still more remarkable is, that, at the same time, he dressed himself in the finest and richest stuffs, so that in his person he displayed an odd mixture of the effeminacy of women, and of the vigour of heroes. He likewise sometimes joined in his person the qualities of Mercury to those of Hercules, a composition of which he was not the inventor, and in which he imitated the Hermeracles that were commonly placed in the Palestræ *.

Commodus, thus exalted to a god, would be honoured as such. He required adorations and sacrifices. He filled Rome with his statues, and preserving his cruel and fierce disposition even in the exercise of his sacrilegious vanity, he ordered to be

* They were statues with the head of Hercules, upon a square basis, which represented Mercury. One may see the figure in the first volume of Montfaucon. Mercury, in Greek, was called Hermes, and Hercules Heracles.

be erected, opposite to the place where the senate assembled, a statue in a threatening attitude, holding a bow bent, and pointed at the senate. After his death, this statue was taken down, and that of Liberty put in its place.

This senate, whom Commodus hated so violently, he however called, after his name, *The Commodian Senate*, as appears by the before-mentioned subscription; so little consistency, and so much contradiction, were there in the designs, or rather in the whims, of this wrong-headed emperor. He would have his name appear every where. The senate was called *Commodian;* the city of Rome the *Commodian Colony;* the legions and the armies *Commodian;* the day on which all this was regulated and ordered *Commodian;* in a word, the age in which he lived, and which he pretended was the golden age, he called *Commodian.* He changed the names of the twelve months of the year, and gave them new ones, all taken from his own. Dion gives us a list of them: I shall only observe that of *Amazonian*, substituted instead of *January;* this name was agreeable to Commodus on two accounts, as recalling to his memory both Hercules, the conqueror of the Amazons, and Marcia, his concubine, whom he was fond of having drawn in the dress of these warlike women. He himself intended to appear upon the arena of the amphitheatre in that dress. It is not mentioned whether his design was executed, but nothing hinders our believing it, since he frequently showed himself in public in the dress of a woman.

Lamprid. 8. and 15.

Lamp. 14.

Lamp. 1.

I doubt not but the recital of all these extravagances is disgusting to the reader; I myself am weary of relating them; but, after all, these instances of ridiculous folly in the highest station of life are a very useful lesson for men to correct their judgments, and to convince them of the mistake they are in, when they consider great riches, and the supreme rank, as the best gifts of fortune. Happy should

should we be if this conviction became real and sincere, and influenced our practice.

Calamities in Commodus's reign.

Rome, already so unhappy by the vices of her prince, experienced, moreover, under this reign the most fatal calamities, famine, plague, and violent fires.

Famine. Lamp. 14.

I have spoken of the famine, which did not proceed from the barrenness of the earth, but from the wickedness of men, and which was increased by remedies ill applied and ill conducted.

Plague. Dio. and Herod.

The plague, which I have but barely mentioned, ravaged all Italy, but it was no where more violent than at Rome. Dion assures us that there died two thousand persons a day. Herodian relates that beasts suffered from the contagion as well as men. History takes no notice of Commodus being affected with it, or of his taking any care to comfort the miserable sufferers; but it informs us of the precautions he used for his own safety. He retired into Laurentum, an agreeable country, and perfumed with many laurel groves, whose salutary fragrance served as a preservative against the corruption of the air.

Dion joins to the plague assassinations committed over all the empire with poisoned bodkins. This is the second instance of that shocking practice, first introduced, as it is said, under Domitian.

Fires. Eus. Chron.

There were two fires in Rome in Commodus's reign; the first caused by thunder, which, falling upon the capitol, consumed libraries, and several

Dio. and Herod.

edifices that were near it. We are furnished with more particulars of the second, which Dion and Herodian more largely describe. The fire seized the house of a private person, and reached the adjoining temple of Peace; this temple, built by Vespasian, was one of the most magnificent in Rome, and filled with rich offerings. Vespasian brought there the spoils of the temple of Jerusalem; besides, the large buildings which belonged to it served as magazines

magazines for the rich merchandise of Egypt and Arabia. All was consumed, and the city was not only deprived of one of its most beautiful ornaments, but many individuals lost all their fortune. The fire at last reached the imperial palace, burnt the place where the archives of the empire were kept, of which a great part was destroyed. The temple of Vesta, which was the sanctuary of the household-gods of Rome, perished likewise in the flames. The palladium was saved with great difficulty, and this sacred pledge, which had never been exposed to mortal eye, was then seen by all the world, carried by the vestals, who snatched it out of the flames, and endeavoured to put it in a place of safety. The fire lasted several days with great violence, and did not cease (according to Dion) but for want of fuel. Herodian quenches it with large friendly showers of rain. It was a great calamity, and superstition turned it into a prodigy which, by burning the temple of Peace, predicted the civil wars which followed the death of Commodus.

The Roman empire had suffered under Commodus all sorts of misfortunes but war. Peace was but little interrupted at home. Upon the frontiers, the barbarians were kept in order, not by the exploits of the prince, but by the valour and management of his lieutenants. There were several of distinguished merit in the art of war. I have mentioned Ulpius Marcellus, Pertinax, Severus, Albinus Niger, who all came to the empire, or disputed it, and were gallant warriors. Their exploits, however, do not appear to have been of any great consequence, doubtless because they had not a proper field to display their abilities.

There were few wars and events of consequence.

We know but little of Commodus's wars; I have already related the war in Great Britain. Lampridius reports that the Roman arms obtained advantages over the Moors, the Daci, and the Sarmatians. Niger, when commander in the East, had some broils with the Saracens, a people since become

Lamprid. 6. and 13.

Spart. Niger. 7.

come so famous by their prodigious conquests, and who appear here for the first time in history. In consequence of these successes, Commodus, who had taken the title of *Imperator* four times with his father, assumed it likewise as often in the course of his own reign. This is all which the ancient monuments inform us of this emperor's military expeditions.

Tillem.

Commodus universally despised and detested.

After the idea we have given of Commodus's government, it is easy to imagine how much he was despised and detested. In him there was a collection of all the vices, without the mixture of one valuable quality. No rule, no principle of action, neither in regard to the good government of the state, nor his own particular personal interest. A life of caprice, a mad passion for the most shameful debauchery, an unheard-of prodigality, and a horrible barbarity, composed this prince's character. Hated by the great men and the senators whose blood he had so often spilt, he had not even the consideration to gain the affections of the people. The citizens of Rome were accustomed to receive largesses from their emperors. Commodus, who was not satisfied with the imperial revenue, but was always using expedients for getting treasure, had nothing to give, and, in the distribution of money or provisions which custom made necessary, excepting on one occasion, he always appeared sordid and avaricious. The subjects of the republic in the provinces, ill treated and oppressed, were desirous to throw off the yoke In a word, the officers of his household, who had his life in their hands, were often victims of his cruelty, and he put many of his chamberlains to death.

His fears.

Seeing himself the object of universal hatred, he discovered his danger, but would not oppose to it the only effectual safeguard, a change of conduct, and had recourse to weak precautions, concealing himself in his pleasure-houses, out of which he rarely came, and carrying his suspicions so far as, after the example of Dionysius the tyrant, to burn his beard and his hair with a gentle flame, being afraid to trust his head to a barber's razor. He

He could not, however, escape the unhappy end he laboured so much to deserve; and, after a reign, or rather a tyranny, of thirteen years, he found among those who were nearest his person enemies who revenged the injuries he had done the world.

New and last fits of his fury. Dio. and Herod.

He provoked and hastened his destruction by fresh extravagances, which even exceeded what had gone before. It was a little before his death that, during a festival of fourteen days, he made a spectacle of himself with less modesty and discretion than ever, killing with arrows and javelins all sorts of beasts, which he had collected from the several parts of the world, and fighting with gladiators.

He was loaded with applauses; even the senators, as Dion, who was one of them, relates, repeated such acclamations as were dictated to them, and all resounded his praises, whilst there was not a spectator who did not blush at the shameful behaviour of the head of the empire. Amidst these feigned acclamations there must have escaped some involuntary discoveries of their inward sentiments, which gave them the lie; for Commodus suspected they only mocked him, and he was so provoked at it, that he was ready to order the soldiers to fall upon the people. He wished likewise to set the city on fire, which he considered as so much the more culpable, that, being his colony, it owed him, on that account, a new degree of attachment and respect. Lætus, the pretorian prefect, diverted him from these mad designs, but they transpired; and it is easy to judge what additional hatred it bred against the prince who had formed them.

Lamp. 15.

Commodus notwithstanding pursued his foolish and bloody thoughts, and the last day of December he formed a plan worthy of himself. He resolved next morning to cause the two consuls Erucius Clarus and Sosius Falco, who were to enter upon their office, to be put to death, in order to make himself consul, and to form in his person the equipage of a gladiator, with the ornaments of consular dignity. That the scene might be complete, he pretended

Dio. and Herod.

to

to go and pass the night with the gladiators, among whom he had for a long time lodged as one of them; so that, in order to take possession of the consulate, he would have to come forth, not from the imperial palace, but out of this infamous dwelling, a gladiator and consul at once; and, thus disguised, would have discharged the august ceremonies of the first day of the year.

He communicated this shocking design to Marcia, his beloved concubine, who had sense enough to endeavour to dissuade him from it. She used tears and entreaties, conjuring him not to disgrace the rank of sovereign with such extravagances, and representing to him the danger of trusting his person and life to gladiators; men who, having no education or sentiment, were capable of the basest and blackest attempts. Commodus was so little moved with these remonstrances, that he instantly sent for Lætus, the pretorian prefect, and Eclectus his chamberlain, and ordered them to make the necessary preparations, that he might go and lie in the school of gladiators. The pretorian prefect and the chamberlain were not less surprised and confounded than Marcia had been, and they ventured to declare to the prince their disapprobation. Commodus, vexed at so much contradiction, insolently and rudely sent away these troublesome censors, and went into his chamber, as if to take his usual nap after dinner. Being alone, he took his table-book, and wrote in it the names of those whom he proposed to put to death the following night. At the head of the list was the name of Marcia, then came Lætus and Eclectus, and to these he added several of the principal senators, intending to rid himself at once of all the zealous admirers of his father, whose presence was uneasy to him, and to divide their spoils among his guards and the gladiators. After he had finished his list, he shut the bloody book, and carelessly left it upon a little bed of ease, whilst he went to the bath.

A.

A child, with whom Commodus diverted himself, according to an immodest custom practised by the voluptuous Romans, who had little naked boys in their houses adorned with collars and bracelets sparkling with gold and diamonds. A boy of this kind, of whom Commodus was so fond that he called him *Philocommodus, friend of Commodus*, comes into the emperor's chamber, to which he had free access, and finding the writing-book, he takes it up to play with it. As the child went out, Marcia met him, and, after having kissed and fondled him, observing the book in his hand, which she suspected might be some piece of importance, not fit for the child to carry about, she takes it from him. Upon opening the book, she knew Commodus's writing, and, excited by curiosity, she read it, and was greatly surprised to see a fatal list of persons condemned to die, at the head of whom was her name, with those of Lætus and Eclectus. "I "commend you, Commodus," says she to herself, "behold the just reward of my affection for thee, "and of the patience with which I have borne thy "brutish behaviour so many years. But, intoxicated "continually with wine and debauchery in which "thou pridest thyself, thou shalt not succeed against "a woman who has all her senses about her."

A conspiracy formed against him.

She sends immediately for Eclectus, whom, it is said, she loved more than Commodus, and giving him the writing-book, "See," says she to him, "what a feast is prepared for us to night." Eclectus was an Egyptian, capable of undertaking any thing. He did not hesitate a moment. He acquaints Lætus with it, and both together consult with Marcia, under the pretence of preparing for the execution of the orders the emperor had given for that night. The danger was urgent; Commodus was to be prevented, or they were to perish.

Lamprid. 15. and 17. Herod.

Marcia undertook to poison him as he came from the bath. It was an easy matter, and could be executed without suspicion; for Marcia was accus-

tomed to give him something to drink when he returned from the bath, or from any of the violent exercises he was so fond of.

He dies poisoned and strangled.

The poison was prepared, mixed with exquisite wine, and given by Marcia to Commodus, who, after bathing, had fought with beasts, and returned very thirsty. He took it without mistrust, and soon after felt his head heavy, with an inclination to sleep. Lætus and Marcia caused every body to retire, as it were to let the emperor repose himself, which occasioned no surprise, as Commodus observed no regular regimen. He used the bath seven or eight times a day; he ate and slept at all hours. So nobody remained about him but the conspirators, who saw themselves absolute masters of his life.

After a few minutes sleep, he awaked with convulsions and violent pains. He vomited much, and Marcia was afraid lest the poison should come all away, or so little remain as not to produce the effect. The physician, whom she had let into the secret, persuaded the emperor, that, to dissipate the numbness which seized him, he should take to the exercise of wrestling. Narcissus the champion was given him for an adversary, who was well instructed what he was to do. In the struggle with Commodus, he seized him by the throat, and choked him.

Aurel. Vict.

Herod. l. 2.

After Commodus was dead, the conspirators, who wished to conceal what had happened from the soldiers of the guard, wrapped up his body in some paltry things, and gave it to two trusty slaves to carry it as lumber out of the palace. The corpse was hastily deposited in a place unknown*, and was brought from thence by Pertinax, Commodus's successor, to the tomb of his ancestors.

Historians differ as to the circumstances of this tragical deed. But all agree in the fact that Commodus was

* We read in Herodian the word ἀρισεῖον, which Tillemont thinks may be interpreted the tomb of illustrious men. I suspect some alteration in the text of the Greek historian. It does not seem probable that they who wished to conceal Commodus's body would carry it to the tomb of Iberos.

was poisoned and strangled, and they all assign Marcia, Lætus, and Eclectus, for the authors of his death. In the relation I have given I have chiefly followed Herodian, as being the most circumstantial writer.

Commodus died thirty-one years and four months old, having reigned, after his father's death twelve years, nine months, and some days. Though, his murderers were undoubtedly guilty of a very great crime, it must, however, be allowed that never did man more deserve a fatal end. His misfortune was a kind of signal and omen to his successors of what they were to expect, who almost all suffered a violent death. He had set aside the laws, which are the only security both to the sovereign and subject, and was the first who suffered the punishment of his folly. But the evil continued, and the contempt which he had drawn upon his person, fell upon the imperial dignity, which never raised itself from that low ebb to which he had reduced it, but became the sport of the army, whose licentiousness he had encouraged.

Almost all his successors die, like him, a violent death.

His memory was detested. The senate in their acclamations, which Lampridius relates at large, called him by a thousand opprobrious names, treating him as an enemy of the gods, a parricide, a tyrant, more cruel than Domitian, and more debauched than Nero. They desired that his body might be dragged along the streets and have no burial, and after Pertinax had caused it to be interred, the senate ordered it to be taken up again, and his ashes scattered in the air. His statues were pulled down, and all the inscriptions on the public monuments which could do him honour were erased; and thus the unjust ignominy he had thrown upon a number of innocent persons, by taking their names out of the public annals, after he had put them to death, was retorted upon himself. The populace fondly adopted the sentiments of the senate. The soldiers alone regretted a prince who loaded them with gifts, and suffered them to live in effeminacy.

His memory detested. Lamprid. 18, 20.

Tillem. art. 8.

He

He made no public work. Lamp. 17.

He erected no public work for the embellishment or utility of Rome, or any of the cities in the empire, and he had the vanity to put his name upon edifices built by others.

An useful establishment of which he was the author.

He is, however, allowed the honour of an institution of great use for the supplying of Rome and Italy with provisions. The fleet from Alexandria brought corn from Egypt. Commodus established another at Carthage to bring corn from Africa, that, in times of scarcity, one might supply the other. But he sullied the honour of this commendable institution with his ridiculous vanity in changing the name of Carthage into that of *Commodian Alexandria*, and desiring the fleet should be called the fleet of Commodus Hercules.

He did not persecute the Christians.

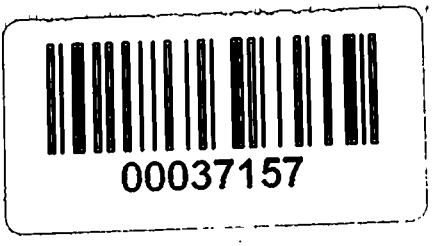
This prince, so much to be contemned and abhorred, did not, however, persecute the Christians. The church enjoyed peace in his reign, and greatly increased. Commodus was too much taken up with his pleasures to attend to any thing else. Thus God makes use of the vices of men for the accomplishment of his designs.

Pollux and Athenæus writers in his time. Tillem.

We have no Latin author to quote of Commodus's reign. The most famous among the Greeks are Pollux and Athenæus, both grammarians, both giving proofs of learning and inquiries, one in respect of his language, the other in regard of his historical antiquities; but that elevation, that spirit and fire, which distinguish superior merit, is what we must not expect to find in the authors of the age I write of. Talents were not encouraged by a prince sunk in pleasure, and who hardly suspected his having a soul.

Thus the sciences came to an end, which for a long time had undergone great alterations. We have not seen among the Romans an orator since Pliny, nor a historian since Tacitus, nor a poet since Juvenal. To polite literature philosophy succeeded, to philosophy barbarism.

END OF VOLUME SEVENTH.


00037157

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 21 October, 2015